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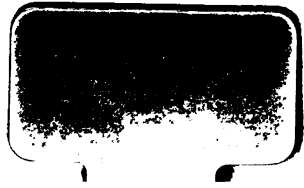
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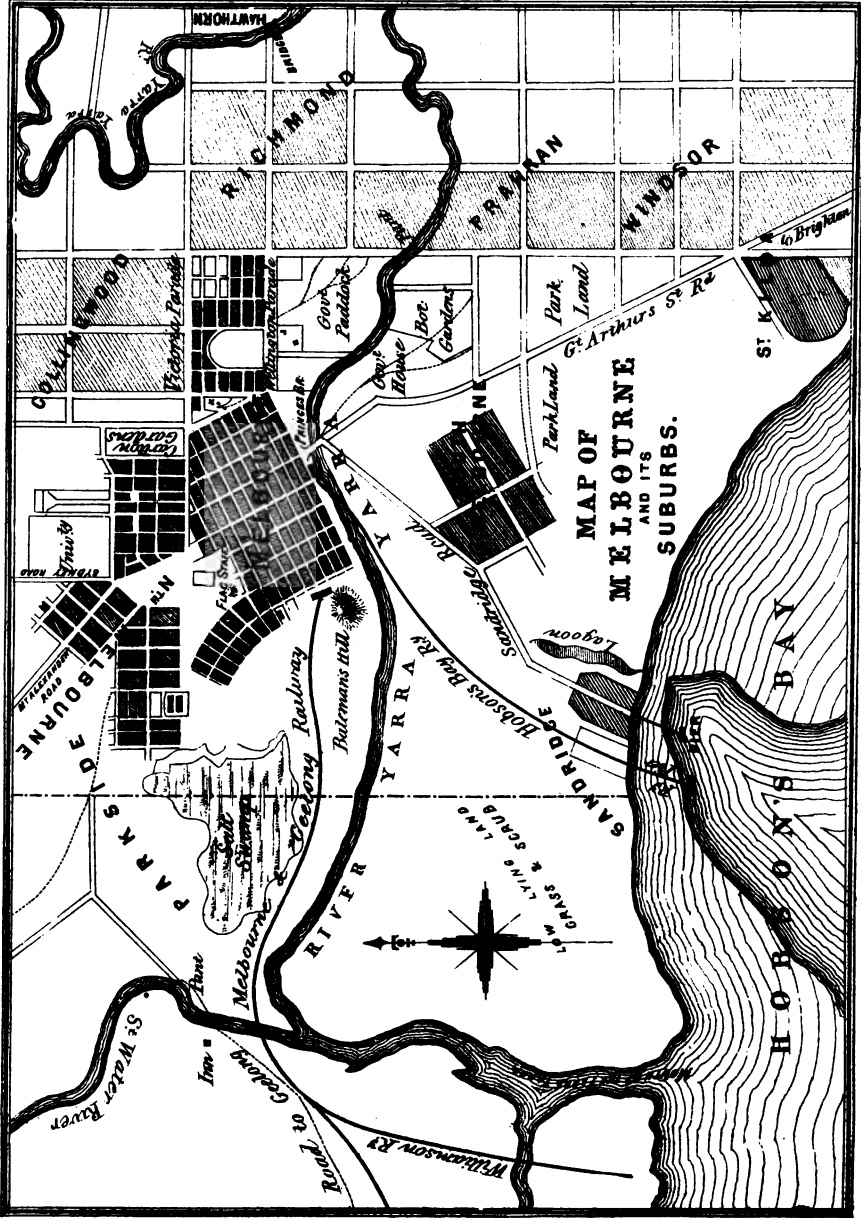
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THE
GOLD ERA OF VICTORIA:

BEING

THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE COLONY

IN ITS

Commercial, Statistical, and Social Aspects.

BY ROBERT CALDWELL,
OF THE FIRM OF CALLENDER, CALDWELL, AND CO.,
MELBOURNE.



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WM. S. ORR AND CO., AMEN CORNER,
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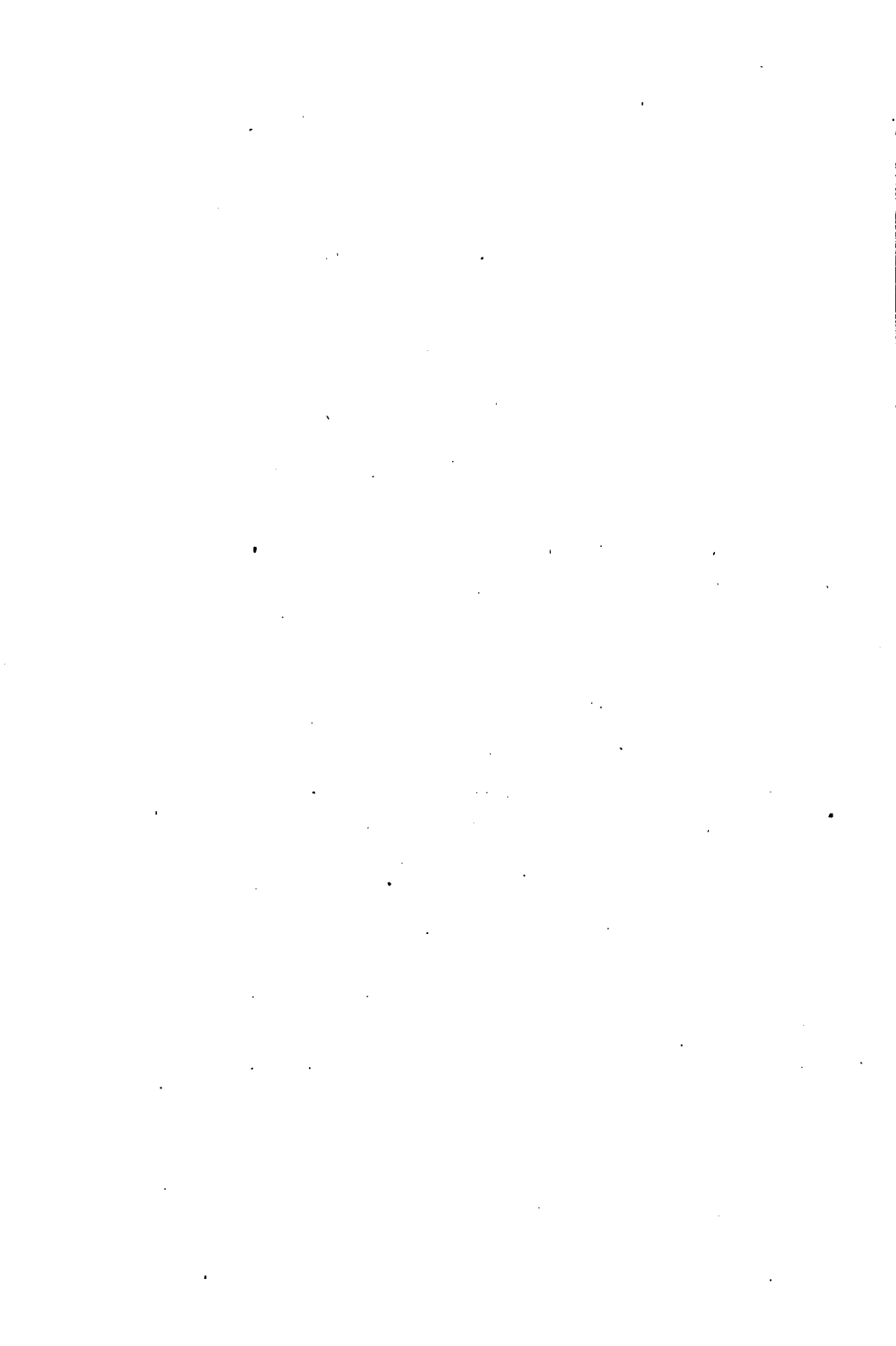
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INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

MAY I be allowed to inform the reader that Victoria, formerly Port Phillip, is the name of the colony in which I have resided during the gold era, and is the subject of the following chapters ; that it is a distinct colony, having its own Governor and Council, and has no connexion with South Australia, with New South Wales, or any of the penal settlements. I am thus particular, because I find that even editors and public writers call it by some other name, and even place the capital of the colony in other districts ; for instance, on the title of a book lately published, Melbourne is put in South Australia ; and Harriet Martineau, in her "Thirty Years' Peace," does not even allude to such a colony as Port Phillip, now Victoria.

Business led me to Melbourne, of which town, as well as of the entire colony, I had previously formed many erroneous notions. I thought, like the rest of the world, that it was peopled with convicts and the offscourings of European civilization ; and so strong is my dislike to a state of society such as I had heard described, that nothing could have induced me to remain in Melbourne, had it really been peopled with a convict population. I was very agreeably surprised, therefore, to discover that the general tone of society in Victoria had been greatly falsified, and that "ticket-of-leave men" were not so numerous as to affect its respectability and prosperity.

My original intention was to have remained only a few weeks, or months at most, in the colony, until my commercial speculations were completed, and then to return. Having, however, seen reason to form a more favourable opinion of the people, I was induced, instead of returning, to join the representative of the extensive mercantile and manufacturing firm of Cowan and Co.

The long connexion of this firm with the colony, their great experience in colonial business, and their immense transactions, held out many inducements for a safe and profitable commission business, so that both during the prosperous and the adverse times of the gold era of the colony, our firm—Callender, Caldwell, and Co.—have worked out their transactions and combinations successfully and satisfactorily to all concerned.

Towards the early part of 1855, I returned on a visit to this country; and, for the information of the correspondents of our firm, I set about writing this pamphlet.

Unlike the above-mentioned firm, who were thoroughly acquainted with the colony and its resources, I found that most of our correspondents knew little or nothing of the country with which many of them were doing a considerable business. Few of them had ever been in Victoria, and none of them possessed any long experience of it or its people. My object, therefore, has been to correct their errors, and to remove their prejudices, by supplying reliable information; and, consequently, this book was mostly written for private distribution amongst our own friends. I have been induced to somewhat extend my plan, and write for those of the public who take an interest in the colony where so many of their countrymen are now residing. This I should hardly have ventured to have done on my own responsibility. Had the information contained in the volumes already before the public been at all equal to their literary merit, this pamphlet would never have appeared; but when I find writers of acknowledged reputation making reckless statements, promulgating views full of prejudice, and sometimes indicating personal animosity, I am emboldened to publish the following chapters. As a specimen of what I refer to, I give, *seriatim*, a few quotations from the first half of the first volume of the last published work on the colony. The author writes—"Before the gold discovery, this colony was almost entirely Scotch." A published census, on the contrary, shows the population, in 1846, to consist of 28,523 English, Irish, &c., and of Scotch only 2,171, or about 7 per cent. Again, "The squatters of the colony amount to about 650." The public directory, published by Blundell and Co., gives the names of 690.

Speaking of the water in the hot weather, he says it is "tepid,

and vapid, and bitter." Now, it is a remarkable fact that the water of this colony, unlike the water at home, will keep in water-holes the summer through, good and sweet. I cannot account for this; but it is a fact which I have often noticed. "The dogs are extraordinarily affected with paralysis." Now this is not a usual thing, as represented, but a complaint which lasted only a few months and disappeared. "The Ovens gold is much finer than that of any other Australian diggings, and purer too." The opposite is the fact.

Of the Melbourne tradesmen, he gives currency to the statement, "Never, in the history of the world, did such a system of ruthless rapacity show itself." Melbourne tradesmen will bear comparison with those of London, for respectability and civility. He quarrels with ferrymen, gardeners, draymen—in fact, he has a tilt at everybody and everything, and all the world of Victoria is wrong. He accuses the "government officers of taking advantage of their position for information, and speculating in land." "Lodgings in Melbourne are £3 to £4 per week, for a single room." Board for workmen is 30s. per week, and superior board from £2 10s. to £5. He describes how land is bought by jobbers with bills, and sold by them for cash, and then how they decamp with the cash. Instead of this being a general system, it is simply impossible, as no purchaser could get the titles till the bills were paid, and of course he could not re-sell without the titles. "The revenue of Victoria is now £2,000,000." It is nearly £4,000,000. He reiterates over and over again his twaddle about the number of thieves, but never condescends to refer to the prison reports to see what convictions there really are. "Bricks are not more than 10s. per 1,000 in London, and £2 10s. per 1,000 in the colony." I do not know the price in London, but understand it is about 23s. to 25s. per 1,000, and in the colony the price at this date was £10 to £16 per 1,000. But enough; I could fill a volume correcting his statements. It is, no doubt, a clever book; but it must be read as a work of fiction, not of fact.

I shall be amply rewarded if I am, to a small extent, instrumental in conveying just impressions, or of removing some few of the prejudices and false conclusions so prevalent, so unjust, and so injurious to the colony, and to those who hold them. A morbid

appetite on the part of the public for accounts of murders, great robberies, bankruptcies, and such like, has led to the careful collection and concentration of all such matter, until the impression has become general that these descriptions are really characteristic of the colony, and that we are a ferocious and mammon-worshipping people. Those who read the following chapters with the expectation of finding such matter, will be disappointed; but they will, it is to be hoped, discover sufficient and satisfactory reasons for changing some of their preconceived opinions. The facts and figures are founded on the most reliable statistics; for which I am chiefly indebted to the "Statistical Register," by W. H. Archer, Esq.; to the "Government Gazette;" and to the Custom-house returns for the colony; and to equally reliable sources of information I have gone for the statistics of the United Kingdom. If I have said anything contrary to fact, I shall be most happy to be corrected, as I have no wish to publish aught but the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

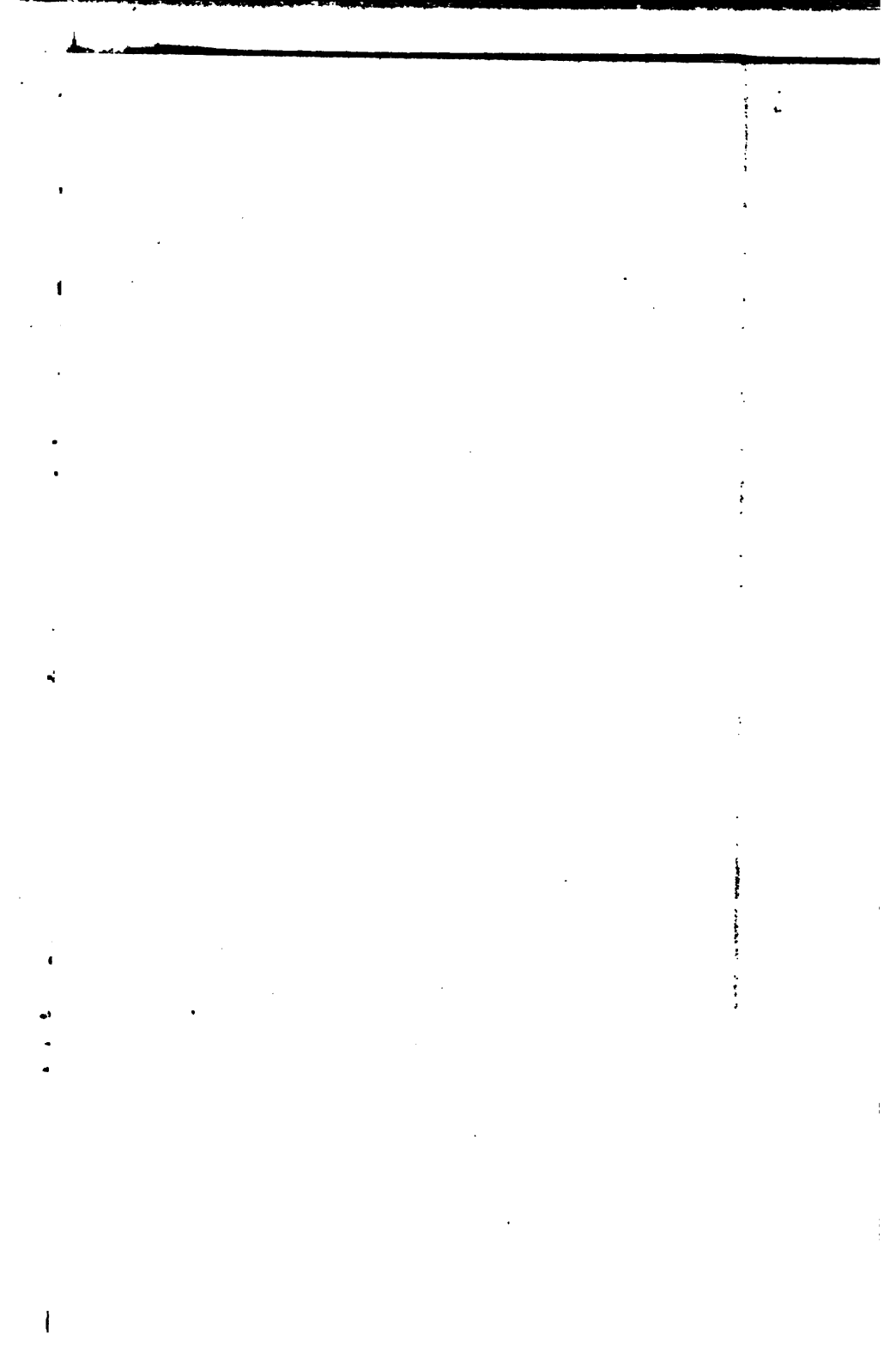
In page 47, twelfth line from foot of page, a misprint occurs; for ten times, read six times as much. The quantity of gold there represented as paid by the Inca of Peru to Pizarro, is also over-estimated. Prescott values it at £3,500,000. The room which the Inca agreed to fill as high as he could reach, is still shown, and measures twenty-two feet by sixteen feet. The above sum given by Prescott would not fill it much above two inches deep with solid gold. It is of little use to go into that subject; even the above sum of £3,500,000 was greater, compared to the commerce of those days, than all the gold found in California and Australia is to the commerce of our day.

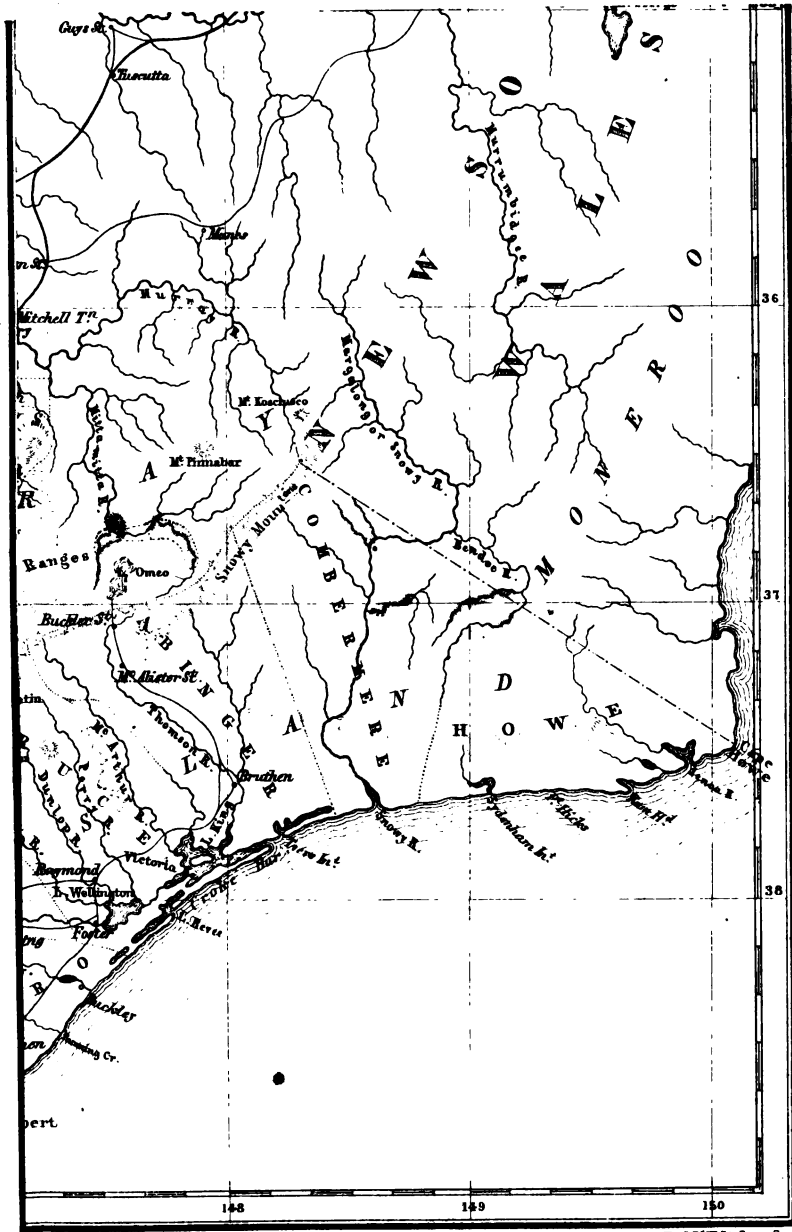
I have, in various places, made statements of figures, and have given, in others, the simple results of a calculation; but, in all cases, I have referred to the best possible data, and conducted my calculations with an anxiety to elucidate only correct information.

ROBERT CALDWELL,

Of the firm of Callender, Caldwell, and Co.

LONDON, *July 2, 1855.*





CHAPTER I.

THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF VICTORIA.

THE importance of Australia as a British possession is becoming every day more apparent; and whether viewed in a political or a commercial light, the well-being of its inhabitants and its future development must become, sooner or later, a vital question with statesmen and merchants. Possessing a line of coast 8,000 miles in length, and a superficial area of three million square miles—scarcely less than the whole of Europe—with an ever-increasing population, and an apparently exhaustless store of wealth, both mineral and agricultural; with a climate which, though necessarily varied with the locality, seems, to a large extent, eminently fitted for the Anglo-Saxon race, and a soil adapted for the growth of the cereals which form the main food of man—the island of Australia presents one of the most remarkable and interesting evidences of the advance and probable final destiny of the great Teutonic family: namely, the subjugation and occupation of the whole earth.

Under the generic name of Australia is comprised a number of distinct colonies, which differ considerably in climate, soil, and natural productions. These are New South Wales, South Australia, Western Australia or Swan River, and Australia Felix or Port Philip, now known as Victoria. With the latter colony, rather than with the entire island, it is my intention to deal; and, as it is of importance that the people of England should know the real state and prospects of this most valuable part of their great possession, I shall endeavour in the following pages to present a brief and succinct account of its climate, resources, and peculiarities; together with such authentic information as cannot but prove useful to merchants and intending emigrants.

THE CLIMATE OF VICTORIA.

So many contradictory accounts of the climate of Victoria have been made public, that it is difficult to arrive at the exact truth. William Howitt, in 1853, pronounced the climate of Melbourne "execrable;" but in his later experience he has not only found it "bearable," but even "delightful" in some seasons of the year. The fact is, that the hot, scorching winds, which prevail from October to May, the warmest of the Australian months, are very trying to a new comer. The hot winds generally begin in the morning, and blow steadily, like the blast of a furnace, till evening, when a cool refreshing breeze springs up from the southern ocean, and drives the clouds of dust back to the north. This is the kind of weather that the newly-arrived emigrant most complains of; but when you have experienced it, you have seen the worst of the Australian climate.

To some constitutions it is quite paralyzing—others are not so much affected by it. I have ridden sixty miles in this weather, and at night felt well and slept comfortably, much more so than after a Scotch east wind, or in a London fog. I believe that those who perspire freely do not suffer from this weather in the same degree as others; certain it is, that those sitting quietly at home suffer more discomfort than others who are knocking actively about. Cold weather, with a good deal of rain, may be said to be the prevailing weather during the rest of the year. The coldest weather ever known in Victoria was on the 8th of June, 1853, when ice was said to have been found in the morning an inch thick—I myself found it thicker than a penny within the city of Melbourne. On Black Thursday (the 6th of February, 1851) the hottest of hot winds ever known in Australia was felt. Add to the hot winds the bush fires which broke out in various places, the clouds of smoke, charcoal dust, and sand, and you can faintly imagine what a day that was. Man and beast had to fly before the ravages of the fire; and many saved themselves by standing in some sheltered spot up to their necks in water, where snakes and every living thing also took shelter, and stood in terror until the devouring element passed by. Horses and cattle perished; and some were to be seen singed, but not destroyed.

The climate of Australia is generally spoken of as a dry one; this, however, is not correct in every sense, as more rain falls in

Victoria than in London. The following register will give a correct idea of the quantity of rain which fell in the years named.

FALL OF RAIN, FROM MAY, 1848, TO APRIL, 1851,

Compiled from a Register kept at Bates' Ford, near Geelong, Port Philip.

	1848—49.	1849—50.	1850—51.
	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.
May	3·70	1·08	1·09
June	1·23	2·44	2·97
July	1·32	2·94	1·00
August	4·94	3·77	1·14
September	2·76	2·08	2·91
October	3·39	1·36	·33
November	2·53	2·93	1·29
December	2·40	·81	1·31
January	·43	1·50	·09
February	1·15	·49	·86
March	1·47	·35	·78
April	3·03	1·75	
Total	<u>28·35</u>	<u>21·50</u>	<u>13·77</u>

From another table by Strzelecki, $30\frac{3}{4}$ inches is given as the average fall of rain in Victoria; $22\frac{1}{4}$ as that of London. From the table kept at Melbourne, the average of five years shows a fall of 30·83 inches; and in London, for the same period, 24·04 inches.

The following remarks will convey a pretty correct notion of Australian weather:—

JANUARY in Victoria corresponds to July in Great Britain, and is the hottest month of the year. The average fall of rain for this month is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Average heat, in the shade, 68 degrees.

FEBRUARY corresponds to August at home; it is nearly as hot as January, and is the driest month of the year—the average heat, in the shade, being $67\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, and the average rain for the month only one inch. Black Thursday occurred in this month (the 6th, 1851). The thermometer rose to 110 degrees in the shade on that day.

MARCH corresponds to our September. Strong winds from the south usually prevail, and generally a good deal of thunder. The average heat, in the shade, is 64 degrees. The average fall of rain for this month is only about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

APRIL corresponds to our October. The average heat, in the shade, is $60\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, the average rain 3 inches. On the 28th of April, in 1847, a shock of earthquake was felt in Melbourne.

MAY corresponds to November in Great Britain. The average heat, in the shade, is 55 degrees; the average fall of rain for the month is $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The wind blows from the north for about half of this month.

JUNE corresponds to December in Great Britain. The average heat, in the shade, is 51 degrees; the average fall of rain is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Frost sets in during this month in the mornings.

JULY corresponds to January at home, and is the coldest month of the year in Victoria. The average heat, in the shade, is $49\frac{1}{4}$ degrees; the average rain is about 2 inches. On the 13th of this month, in 1849, the thermometer fell to 26 degrees Fah., the lowest ever known in Melbourne. Sharp frosts occur during this month, frequently accompanied by heavy showers of hail and sleet.

AUGUST corresponds to February at home. There are more wet days in this month than in any other during the year; and out of the thirty-one days, fifteen may be expected to be rainy. In 1849, on the 29th and 30th of this month, snow fell, which is the only instance known of snow falling in Melbourne. The average heat, in the shade, is $50\frac{1}{2}$ degrees; the average fall of rain during this month is $3\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

SEPTEMBER corresponds to our March. This is the month when the equinoxial gales prevail. The average heat, in the shade, is 55 degrees; and the average fall of rain is about 3 inches.

OCTOBER corresponds to our April. The prevailing wind during this month is from the south: it is considered the most delightful month of the year. The ground is covered with verdure, and the flowers are in full bloom and very plentiful. The average heat, in the shade, is 59 degrees; and the average fall of rain is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The hot winds begin during the close of the month.

NOVEMBER corresponds to the month of May in Great Britain. Summer weather may now be fairly expected. In 1849 the greatest fall of rain ever known in the colony took place in this month. On the night of the 27th the gale set in from the south, and for several days all the lower part of Melbourne was flooded; boats sailed from the beach right up to the Post-office, and much property was destroyed. The rain-fall during that month was $12\frac{1}{8}$ inches. The average heat during this month is 61 degrees, and the average fall of rain amounts to $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

DECEMBER corresponds to the month of June at home. The average heat in the shade is 66 degrees; the average fall of rain for this month is about $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches. About this season great changes from heat to cold occur. In 1852, the 31st of the month, the thermometer rose to 130 degrees in the sun, and in a few days after it fell to 54.

COMPARATIVE METEOROLOGICAL TABLE,
SHOWING THE CLIMATES OF MELBOURNE AND LONDON.

Month.	Mean Barometer.		Mean Thermo- meter.		Mean Density Point.			Mean Fall of Rain.	
	Four daily observations at Melbourne.	At London.	Four daily obser- vations in shade at Melbourne.	At London.	Thermometer in shade, at 2:30 P.M. at Melbourne.	Wet thermometer, at 2:30 P.M., at Melbourne.	At London.	At Melbourne.	At London.
January	Inches. 30·065	Inches.	67·94		73·12	65·60		Inches. 1·36	Inches.
July . . .		29·452		63·17			55·37		2·44
February .	29·909		67·31		72·84	65·90		0·95	
August . .		29·971		62·78			55·16		2·57
March . . .	30·099		63·92		68·92	63·06		1·60	
September .		29·882		57·00			50·49		2·97
April . . .	29·991		60·56		65·01	60·40		3·13	
October . .		29·949		50·37			45·64		2·46
May	29·962		54·91		53·90	55·26		3·65	
November .		29·834		43·12			39·87		2·58
June	29·960		51·00		54·54	51·93		2·41	
December .		29·957		40·09			37·47		1·65
July	29·983		49·34		53·17	50·57		2·18	
January . .		29·952		36·02			33·49		1·56
August . . .	29·942		50·66		54·50	51·29		3·61	
February . .		29·926		39·75			35·98		1·45
September .	29·964		55·08		58·90	55·37		3·27	
March		29·935		42·65			37·82		1·36
October . . .	29·963		58·97		63·72	58·65		2·64	
April		29·919		47·57			40·57		1·55
November . .	29·835		62·25		66·76	61·18		4·27*	
May		29·959		55·26			46·79		1·67
December . .	29·846		66·29		70·98	64·21		1·86	
June		29·970		60·68			53·16		1·98
Means . . .	29·960	29·892	59·02	49·87	63·45	58·62	44·32	2·571	2·003
Excess of Melbourne over London	} 0·068		} 9·15		} 14·30		} 0·558		

* This is the average of November, for the five years 1846-51. In 1849, 12·13 inches of rain fell, which amount is not included in the total from which the mean of 4·27 inches was found; if we include 1849, the mean for November in the six years will be 5·58 inches.

One of the greatest pests of Melbourne is the large bluebottle fly, which watches and darts down on any butcher's meat that may be left without a cover. The immense numbers of the common fly are also very disagreeable. A remedy for these nuisances is, however, at our door; yet, strange to say, we take very little advantage of it. The flying squirrel is easily domesticated, and will clear a room of flies in a few minutes. The mosquito is also troublesome in low-lying grounds, but by no means so much so as it is represented to be in the West Indies and other hot climates.

The rate of mortality in Melbourne has hitherto been unusually large, particularly among infants. This arises probably from their undue exposure to heat and improper diet; but as soon as the supply of vegetables and milk becomes more regular, the proportion of deaths under five years may be expected rapidly to decrease. The drainage and water supply of the city, too, has hitherto been insufficient; but reform in these particulars is rapidly taking place; and as the usages of civilization become better known and practised, the general health of the town and district cannot but improve.

From Jan. 1 to March 31, 1854 (three months), the deaths in Melbourne were—

Males under five years	126
Females under five years	134
Males above five years	111
Females above five years	52
Total	<u>423</u>

This, in a population of 100,000, gives a rate of mortality of about one in forty-nine—not an excessive rate, considering the circumstances of the colony.

CHAPTER II.

THE COMMERCE OF VICTORIA.

THE population of the colony in this present year, 1855, is estimated at certainly not less than 300,000; the census of April 1854 giving the exact number as 232,872. Now, when we come to consider that in 1846 the population of Victoria was only 32,879—less than that of a moderately busy country town in Old England—and that in 1851 it had risen only to 77,345, the increase may be considered one of the most remarkable facts in history. According to the rate of increase during the last four years, and reckoning the immigration from Europe as averaging not less than 100,000 per annum—a not extravagant estimate when we consider that no fewer than 200,000 persons landed in New York alone in 1852—we may fairly calculate upon numbering two millions of inhabitants in 1865; a population nearly equal to that of Scotland. Allowing, of course, for the natural rate of increase of births over deaths—about 33½ per cent. in five years—this calculation will give to the colony of Victoria in 1870 a population of not less than 3,000,000.

The question then arises—What are the natural resources, and whence are we to look for food and employment for this large increase in our numbers in the colony of Victoria? Only from our experience of the past can we prophesy of the future; and a careful examination, therefore, of the commerce of the colony since the discovery of the gold in its streams and mountains, will help us to answer these questions.

When the “Gold fever,” as it is called, set in, towards the end of 1851 to the middle of 1852, every necessary, except beef and mutton, and every luxury, except the precious metal itself, had to be imported for the sustentation and convenience of the

teeming myriads who poured into the colony. As a natural consequence of the demand being greater than the supply, the prices of all commodities rose immensely; and those who were fortunate enough to import goods during this period, made rapid fortunes.

This state of things lasted till the winter of 1853, during which some little depression was felt, and some articles of clothing and food—boots and shoes, cheese, &c.—were sold at a loss. A revival succeeded, to be followed only by the panic of 1854, when the banks refused the usual accommodation, and many failures ensued. But nothing so entirely proved the soundness of our commercial system, as that the crisis passed over without material injury to the colony. Irregular and reckless speculation was checked, and judicious ventures only were entered on. The overstocking the markets with ill-assorted goods was no longer to be dreaded; and the dangerous spirit of overtrading, which led to the importation of immense quantities of irregular articles, received a wholesome warning. The crisis once passed, the real wants of the population came to be better studied; and no more will be seen the anomaly of our markets stocked with boots, shoes, and clothing fitted only for the towns of England, and no longer will there lie on the wharves of Melbourne a three-legged iron pot and a camp stove for every man, woman, and child in the colony!

The quantity of imports which this colony is capable of absorbing is limited by those laws which regulate all other communities, and which may be stated at its power of paying for them; and, brought to this test, it does not appear that we have greatly, if at all, exceeded our proper limits—the error not being so much in quantity as in quality, or proper selection of imports. A certain excess of imports over exports is not only allowable, but indicates, as in the case of New York, a healthy state of trade; indeed, trade would cease to be profitable if the goods imported by the merchant were not worth more to him than the goods he exported in exchange for them.

The excess of imports over exports in New York for the four years 1847 to 1850, nearly equals that of Victoria.

Imports into New York for four years . . .	£130,736,150	12s.	6d.
Exports during the same period . . .	£125,903,186	0s.	10d.
Excess of imports over exports . . .	£4,832,964	11s.	8d.

Imports into Victoria for four years (1851 to 1854)	£36,379,234
Exports during the same period	£32,115,589
Excess of imports over exports	£4,263,645

Besides, it has been suspected, and with some reason, that our imports are exaggerated in amount, no check being exercised on the values entered at the Custom-house by merchants, and vanity prompting them to enter the extreme rates; while, on the other hand, our export being chiefly in gold, no exaggeration of either price or quantity can take place, and freight and charges are not included.

In order to obtain a correct comparative view of the exports and imports of the colony, freight and charges should be added in both cases, or not at all. It must also be remembered that a large quantity of gold leaves the colony by private hand, and therefore cannot be brought into the account. We shall, however, arrive nearer the truth, if we take ten per cent. from the value of all imports,

Which will give us for the four years	£3,637,923
Add, for extra value of gold, including freight and charges (the gold is estimated at £3 10s. or £3 15s. per oz.), 6s. per oz. on 4,617,846 ounces	£1,154,461 10s.
	£4,792,384 10s.
Estimated quantity taken by private hand	500,000
	£5,292,384 10s.
Exchange in favour of exports (say)	250,000
Total	£5,542,384 10s.

This will bring the imports and exports to nearly the same amount for the four years ending 1854. I think it may be safely asserted that this does not indicate an unhealthy state of things; but at the same time it teaches us the necessity of greater judgment and care in the selection of goods for shipping. It is not so much a glut, as the unsaleable description of goods imported, that has caused the losses sustained by the colony. Further, in confirmation of the above opinion, the seven banks held in gold and specie £3,139,435, up to the October return in 1854; and by last advices, nearly the same amount remained in the coffers of the banks.

The value of Victoria to England can best be estimated by comparison with other markets. The population of Europe consumes of British manufactures only the small amount of 2s. per head, while that of Victoria consumes £30 per head. One Australian customer is as good as three hundred European customers; or the 300,000 people of Victoria consume of British manufactures as much as 90,000,000 Europeans.

The following is a statement of the value of British and Irish produce and manufactures exported from the United Kingdom to the following countries:—

Value of British and Irish produce and manufactures imported into the following countries:—			
Canada, East	£2,451,534	VICTORIA, 1853	£9,092,100
Canada, West, and all other		Russia, 1851	1,289,704
North American colonies	1,279,346	France, 1851	2,028,463
All the West Indian colonies,	2,433,665	Hamburg, 1851	3,014,012
Gibraltar, Malta, and Goza,		Bombay, 1848	1,389,757
Cape of Good Hope, Gambia,		Calcutta	6,515,382
Gold Coast, Sierra Leone,		Madras	586,496
Ceylon, Mauritius	2,192,887		
Hong Kong, St. Helena, As-			
cension, New Zealand, Heli-			
goland	829,735		
	<hr/>		
	£9,187,167		

It thus appears that Victoria alone is nearly equal to all the other colonies of the British empire (not including the other Australian colonies), and is equal of itself to all India, and surpasses in importance any other market in the world; and not only is this the case, but the other colonies receive no less an amount, chiefly in gold, than £2,917,793 from Victoria, and are, consequently, enabled to purchase British manufactures to a corresponding amount. As a further confirmation of this statement, and more fully to illustrate my meaning,—of the total exports of the United Kingdom from the 25th of May to the 25th of June, 1854, amounting to £8,422,196, no less than one-eighth, or £1,047,947, was for the Australian colonies.

The total export from the United Kingdom of the single article Beer, for the above period, amounted to £125,542, of which the Australian colonies took more than half, or £69,904.

The shipping from the 5th of May to the 5th of June, to all parts of the world, from the United Kingdom, amounted to 768,626 tons. For a similar period the tonnage to Australia was 40,461 tons, or a nineteenth part of the whole export tonnage of the United Kingdom.

THE SHIPPING INWARDS AND OUTWARDS DURING THE GOLD ERA, OR 1851, 1852, 1853.

	INWARDS.		OUTWARDS.	
	Number.	Tons.	Number.	Tons.
1851	712	129,426	658	111,005
1852	1654	408,216	1475	350,296
1853	2594	721,473	2268	664,867

The following tables, compiled by the collector of customs for Victoria, present a detail of the imports and exports for the era of the gold diggings. The figures represent values in pounds sterling.

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS FOR 1851, 1852, AND 1853.

	IMPORTS.			EXPORTS.		
	1851.	1852.	1853.	1851.	1852.	1853.
Agricultural Implements	552	561	4,027	....	....	—
Alkali (Soda)	3,061	1,827	9,803	....	....	112
Apparel and Slops	66,063	168,317	609,804	62	8,215	14,147
Arms	....	12	1,062	....	....	....
Caps	....	12	1,062	....	....	....
Guns	177	4,819	38,561	....	20	2,190
Powder	2,193	1,851	12,896	....	....	....
Shot	697	1,573	3,673	....	....	....
Arrowroot and Sago	850	2,212	14,795	....	239	438
Baggage	....	....	....	....	....	648
Bags and Sacks	12,237	11,501	35,735	242	5,879	12,016
Bark	....	115	530	1,030	70	....
Beer and Cider	40,612	164,937	614,692	158	1,006	5,642
Blankets and Woollens	28,488	98,267	394,910	....	10	....
Bones	....	....	....	544	646	1,230
Bran	662	21,699	85,412	....	....	165
Bricks	712	7,369	90,044	....	118	1,008
Brushware	2,407	2,368	9,901	....	....	....
Butter and Cheese	7,422	66,870	300,333	636	564	3,661
Candles	1,306	15,902	78,141	408	81	989
Candlewick	....	....	1,435	....	....	340
Canvas	4,603	23,781	67,416	....	361	2,940
Carpeting	2,549	1,457	11,251	....	....	....
Carriages, Carts, &c.	5,430	53,404	108,827	87	95	730
Casks (empty)	....	1,833	5,226	....	....	....
Cement	1,480	1,422	8,769	....	....	50
Chicory	....	....	2,752	....	....	100
Chinaware & Earthenware	13,946	25,046	83,277	....	338	1,510
Coals and Fuel	2,373	28,948	190,831	....	970	9,355
Cocoa	....	....	911	....	....	....
Cocoa Nuts	....	146	2,018	....	....	....

COMMERCE OF VICTORIA.

	IMPORTS.			EXPORTS.		
	1851.	1852.	1853.	1851.	1852.	1853.
Coffee and Chocolate	10,019	16,005	112,266	....	1,369	10,654
Colours (Painters)	6,007	2,138	....	....	....	....
Confectionery	916	8,461	79,219	3	231	114
Copper	738	719	295	....	65	2,125
Cordage and Rope	6,951	9,439	34,806	75	1,129	1,307
Corks	1,833	3,436	13,914	....	50	92
Corn (meal) . . . . .	....	....	3,542	....	....	....
Cottons	72,448	161,498	570,128	....	9,636	21,944
Cutlery	2,969	2,268	29,522	....	....	....
Cradles . . . . .	....	372	....	....	....	100
Drugs	11,734	29,126	136,529	....	183	1,685
Documents . . . . .	....	....	....	....	....	497
Eggs . . . . .	....	699	....	....	....	....
Felt . . . . .	....	42	5,351	....	....	23
Fireworks . . . . .	....	....	700	....	....	....
Fish { Salt	1,238	6,365	70,845	....	....	....
{ Preserved . . . . .	....	....	17,029	....	91	3,575
{ Shell . . . . .	....	167	8,365	....	....	....
Flax and Hemp	136	21	40	....	....	....
Flour and Bread	45,264	422,643	851,260	414	1,630	155,678
Fruit { Dried	5,332	23,208	133,491	....	921	4,763
{ Green	2,106	7,049	30,393	....	....	189
Furs and Feathers	84	....	2,120	....	....	160
Furniture	7,711	48,321	308,752	15	562	15,653
Gold . . . . .	....	....	....	438,777	6,135,728	8,644,629
Glassware	8,282	21,562	96,023	....	223	1,409
Glasses, silvered	835	....	....	....	....	....
Grain { Barley	1,076	6,726	45,957	97	203	4,427
{ Maize	3,832	18,028	42,357	....	....	747
{ Malt	1,288	446	13,793	....	....	....
{ Oats	8,029	65,755	395,908	30	....	1,005
{ Peas	25	754	4,016	....	....	840
{ Rice	3,041	5,995	30,914	....	142	21,567
{ Wheat	15,358	19,142	29,528	3,647	11,583	29,577
{ Other grain . . . . .	....	....	6,276	....	....	40
Glue	305	....	....	....	....	....
Grindery	603	634	....	....	....	....
Grindstones	552	131	867	....	....	30
Guano . . . . .	....	....	50	18	30	50
Gutta Percha and Gum . . . . .	....	110	241	....	....	250
Haberdashery	74,299	220,123	786,387	15	1,413	15,726
Hardware	71,674	187,170	680,061	....	2,764	28,745
Hair	623	439	....	....	....	26
Hats and Caps	5,721	17,832	55,940	....	335	395
Hay and Straw	1,053	18,148	171,332	12	....	....
Heather . . . . .	....	....	....	....	....	40
Hollow-ware . . . . .	....	2,092	9,102	....	....	....
Hops	4,241	3,948	22,785	....	150	2,853
Horsehair . . . . .	....	....	3,557	....	....	....
Hosiery and Gloves	2,878	12,603	62,952	....	902	4,505
Ice . . . . .	....	....	516	....	....	....
Instruments { Medical	18	9,721	6,607	....	....	1,945
{ Musical	5,681	70	22,388	....	100	....
{ Scientific	469	628	2,387	....	....	....

	IMPORTS.			EXPORTS.			
	1851.	1852.	1853.	1851.	1852.	1853.	
India-rubber (good)	....	....	4,518	....	....	—
Indigo	....	....	....	....	....	100
Iron and Steel	17,938	18,850	71,612	....	3,252	—
Iron { Galvanized	....	2,514	16,167	....	....	—
{ Pig	....	730	4,469	....	....	3,988
Ironmongery	....	....	95,999	....	622	—
Iron Houses	....	370	101,380	....	....	1,650
Ivory	....	....	370	....	....	—
Jewellery	1,165	15,977	102,620	....	45	4,433
Lacquered Ware	....	....	1,518	....	....	—
Lard	....	....	7,861	10	....	4,721
Lead	49,091	3,310	12,085	....	....	131
Leather { Boots, &c.	13,871	103,489	439,753	5	2,256	—	
{ Unmanufactured	1,108	6,469	22,241	3,961	663	10,415	
Lime	452	2,219	30,307	....	....	—
Lime-juice	....	208	948	....	....	141
Linens	9,544	11,210	5,712	....	....	—
Live Stock	{ Cattle*	78	1,664	275	17,302	15,747	29,485
	{ Horses	3,013	31,812	14,600	1,001	839	445
	{ Fowls	210	—
	{ Mules	1,240	—
	{ Pigs	1,025	6	30	—
	{ Sheep*	611	829	220	22,506	19,513	26,549
Machinery	4,888	13,757	50,217	....	1,383	13,451
Marble	1,144	186	1,463	....	....	35
Mats and Rugs	390	966	13,253	....	....	320
Matches	423	1,768	13,882	....	....	33
Millinery	1,505	9,815	40,209	....	....	3,079
Mill-stones	412	....	....	....	....	—
Nails	15,488	16,019	34,962	....	21	464
Oakum	262	130	265	....	80	50
Oatmeal and Cornmeal	917	3,807	65,312	....	146	7,437
{ Black	2,767	4,845	5,513	165	40	—	
{ Castor Oil	....	30	....	....	....	—
Oil { Cocoa Nut	....	....	853	....	....	1,320
{ Palm Oil	....	....	....	....	....	480
{ Linseed	2,268	1,234	11,493	....	....	104
{ Olive	304	386	....	....	517	63
{ Sperm	786	2,119	11,171	....	....	—
Oilcloth	555	567	3,938	....	....	—
Oilmen's Stores	26,877	84,086	301,333	....	736	9,608
Onions	1,113	2,343	10,941	....	16	180
Paint	....	....	....	....	....	112
Paintings and Engravings	588	2,786	8,490	4	....	450
Paper-maché	....	260	955	....	....	—
Paper	....	....	....	....	....	4,284
Perfumery	1,600	1,580	6,050	....	15	—
Pipes (tobacco)	775	1,274	16,717	....	150	—
Plants and Seeds	668	686	2,636	....	94	1,369
Plate and Platedware	1,537	2,432	18,015	359	....	—
Provisions	{ Salted	2,475	51,297	239,212	23,649	9,338	31,580
	{ Preserved	136	983	17,688	—

* This does not represent the cattle and sheep imported, as great numbers have come overland from the Sydney side.

COMMERCE OF VICTORIA.

	IMPORTS.			EXPORTS.		
	1851.	1852.	1853.	1851.	1852.	1853.
Potatoes	8,892	25,887	169,847	359	376	1,184
Quicksilver . . . . .	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	60
Battans	61	43	2,649	.....	.....	300
Saddlery	16,838	23,283	86,088	90	585	1,514
Salt	6,441	7,644	20,314	.....	2,335	1,874
Saltpetre	86	.....	921	.....	.....	46
Sculpture . . . . .	.....	.....	515	.....	.....	—
Shells . . . . .	.....	.....	75	.....	.....	—
Ships' Chandlery	575	312	4,783	.....	.....	—
Silks	3,443	12,164	125,400	.....	.....	2,690
Skins	479	.....	.....	7,414	13,315	11,811
Slates	3,457	3,008	25,540	.....	.....	—
Soap	448	10,396	46,862	1,286	2,854	3,785
Soda Water . . . . .	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	20
Specie . . . . .	.....	404,492	1,163,344	.....	10,100	29,366
Specimens Natural His- tory )	.....	15	10	72	393	650
Spices and Pepper	810	1,365	42,518	.....	.....	1,534
{ Brandy	23,295	148,163	629,092	.....	5,476	17,328
{ Cordials	55	2,080	17,248	.....	82	463
{ Gin	4,963	48,744	196,841	.....	1,873	4,906
Spirits { Perfumed . . . . .	.....	859	4,562	.....	.....	190
{ Rum	15,084	104,339	148,439	.....	3,058	17,739
{ Whisky	3,693	15,931	42,467	.....	448	3,085
{ Other Spirits . . . . .	.....	550	6,404	.....	450	1,310
Starch and Blue	1,457	1,116	4,217	15	.....	286
Stationery	26,557	52,367	144,146	43	982	2,185
Statuary . . . . .	.....	20	56	.....	.....	—
Stoneware . . . . .	.....	676	8,111	.....	.....	—
Stone	765	597	9,557	.....	.....	—
Sugar { Molasses	237	116	3,846	.....	112	386
{ Raw	17,509	133,052	363,302	.....	.....	—
{ Refined	11,394	13,667	119,466	.....	9,728	16,042
Sugar-cane . . . . .	.....	.....	15	.....	.....	—
Syrup . . . . .	.....	.....	966	.....	.....	49
Tallow . . . . .	.....	.....	.....	123,208	60,261	13,252
Tar and Pitch	1,695	1,324	6,953	.....	95	1,278
Tarpaulins . . . . .	.....	.....	6,951	.....	71	124
Tea	34,933	118,264	205,364	.....	11,912	—
Tents	474	4,916	14,741	.....	.....	11,524
Tin Ore or Black Sand . . . . .	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	15
{ Battans	16,408	27,322	8,995	17	.....	—
{ Boats . . . . .	.....	205	1,445	.....	.....	60
{ Deals and Battans . . . . .	.....	.....	383,561	.....	35	2,827
{ Laths	1,225	1,127	60,975	.....	.....	—
{ Oars	120	601	1,387	.....	.....	80
Timber { Palings . . . . .	.....	.....	129,539	.....	.....	300
{ Posts and Rails	6,594	20,993	30,116	.....	.....	—
{ Shingles	1,958	4,230	68,640	.....	.....	35
{ Spokes & Felloes . . . . .	.....	906	4,862	.....	.....	—
{ Staves	1,878	629	2,932	15	.....	450
{ Sawn	10,261	78,167	781,716	65	.....	—
{ Other Timber	1,175	774	.....	.....	28	—
Tinware	3,156	13,431	22,074	.....	614	2,050

	IMPORTS.			EXPORTS.		
	1851.	1852.	1853.	1851.	1852.	1853.
Tobacco and Snuff	45,024	152,758	357,896	.....	13,212	40,022
Tools and Utensils . . . . .	.....	8,070	57,010	.....	.....	.....
Toys, Turnery, and Combs	747	3,604	1,746	.....	15	675
Twine and Thread	161	1,074	8,567	.....	.....	1,091
Tiles . . . . .	.....	.....	2,016	.....	.....	.....
Type . . . . .	.....	560	.....	.....	.....	.....
Varnish and Turpentine	1,188	495	.....	.....	30	83
Vinegar . . . . .	.....	.....	9,856	.....	.....	.....
Vinegar, Raspberry	1,463	5,844	1,463	.....	.....	1,608
Vegetables . . . . .	.....	14	2,057	.....	.....	15
Watches and Clocks	1,386	6,635	50,923	.....	121	2,042
Wax . . . . .	.....	.....	.....68	.....	.....	.....
Whalebone . . . . .	.....	.....	.....	.....	200	15
Wickerware	140	174	1,516	.....	.....	.....
Wine	19,486	116,282	353,529	48	6,351	15,844
Wooden Houses	921	28,777	246,371	.....	.....	.....
Woodenware . . . . .	.....	.....	36,840	32	90	7,815
Wool . . . . .	.....	600	645	734,618	1,620,787	1,651,871
Works of Art . . . . .	.....	.....	30	.....	.....	.....
Zinc	343	833	11,760	.....	.....	120

GOLD OVERLAND TO SYDNEY AND ADELAIDE IN THE YEARS 1848, 1849, AND 1850.

	1848.	1849.	1850.
The total amounts were	373,676	479,831	744,825
Imports	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Exports	678,359	755,329	1,041,796

The imports for the first nine months of 1854 amounted to the enormous sum of £12,410,418

And allow that the last quarter falls to 3,000,000

This makes a total for 1854 of £15,410,418

While our imports have thus swelled to this enormous amount, the power of paying for them has somewhat decreased. The first nine months of 1854 the total amount of gold shipped was 1,653,999 ounces at £4 £6,615,996

And allow one-third more for the last quarter 2,205,332

8,821,328

Take the other exports at the same as in 1853 1,695,079

This makes a total of exports for 1854 of £10,516,407

The amount of exports under imports for 1854 will

be about 4,894,011

£15,410,418

SUMMARY OF IMPORTS AND EXPORTS.

Imports.		Exports.	
1851,	£1,056,437	£1,422,909	
1852,	4,069,742	8,314,326	
1853,	15,842,637	11,861,947	
1854,	15,410,418	10,516,407	
	£36,379,234	£32,115,589	
Excess of imports over exports during the era of gold digging		4,263,645	
		£36,379,234	

The above is according to the official returns; but, as before stated, the amount of gold exported is undoubtedly greater than there stated. According to Mr. Hull, the amount in 1851, 1852, and 1853, is ten and a half millions more: perhaps we shall be nearer the truth when we say, the exports are about equal to the imports for the four years.

The following is the Melbourne Prices Current of the principal articles consumed in Victoria up to February 1855:—

BAGS—	£	s.	d.	CANDLES, continued—	£	s.	d.
Gunny, doz.	7s. 6d.	to	0 8 6	Real Sperm,	0	1	8½
3 Bushel, doz.	15s.	to	0 16 0	Composite	1s. 6d.	to	0 1 7
Woolpacks, each	4s. 6d.	to	0 5 0	CANVAS—			
Flour, 100 lb.	per doz.	0	7 0	Best Navy,	1s. 1d.	to	0 1 2
BOOTS AND SHOES—				CEMENT— Very little demand.			
Gents. summer boots,	} Held for 20 and 25 per cent. on invoice.			Plaster Paris,	18s.	to	1 0 0
Wellington & Clarence,				CHICOBY, per lb.	0	0	4
Blucher ditto,				COAL, per ton—			
Ladies' boots & shoes,	} in demand for winter			New South Wales, wharf	3	0	0
Winter Goods,				English, do.	£3 15s.	to	4 0 0
Str. Bluch. & laced boots,				COFFEE— Duty paid.			
Watertights,				Ceylon plantation, lb.	7½d.	to	0 0 7½
Wax boots, 16 to 18 inch leg,		0	15 0	Mocha	0	0	7½
Fine light calf pegged		16s.	to	0 17 0	COPPER—		
BREADSTUFFS—				Sheathing, new, per lb.	0	1	6
Flour, 1st Adelaide, 2000lbs.	£44	to	45 0 0	CORDAGE AND TWINE—			
Other Colonial,	43	0	0	English, per ton, tarred, in demand, none			
Corn Meal, half-barrel,	1	0	0	Manilla rope, do. assorted,	£85	to	90 0 0
Oatmeal, Scotch, per ton	26	0	0	Sewing twine, per lb.	0	1	0
Pearl barley, per ton,	26	0	0	CORKS— 1s. to 2s. 6d. per gross.			
Sago, pearl, per lb.	0	0	2½	DRY GOODS—			
BRICKS—				Blankets, white, chiefly 8-4			
English, 1000, at wharf				to 10-4, large stock.			
(nominal)	4	10	0	Flannels, imitn. Wah. good quality, do.			
Fire, at wharf	14	0	0	Carpets, Brussels, 10 per cent. on invoice.			
CANDLES, per lb.—				Do. Kidderminster; discount.			
Neva sterine*	0	2	0	Table diaper, no demand.			

* These candles, made in St. Petersburg, bring the highest price, and are really the cheapest and best.

DRY GOODS, continued—		£	s.	d.	
Grey sheetings, 8-4, 22½, to 25 per ct. on invoice.					
Cotton Duck: Amer., Nos.					
1 to 10	1s. 6d. to	0	1	7	
Cotton Drill	5¼d. to	0	0	6½	
Handkfs. printed cot. 25 per cent. discount.					
Rugs, bleach. diap., 9-4, 10-4, 11-4, do.					
Lamb's-wool shirts, white, 20 per cent.					
Drawers, serge and kersey, 20 per cent.					
Pantaloon, lamb's-wool and merino, do.					
Men's fancy regatta dr'd. in boxes, do.					
Youth's white regatta, do.					
Braces, men's cotton and India-rubber, 15 to 20 per cent.					
Fine Clothing, in little demand.					
Ordinary clothing, no demand.					
Ribbons, black sarsenet, 8, 10, and 12, 20 per cent.					
Parasols, brown silk & satin, no demand.					
Silk neckerchiefs, black, do.					
Millinery, do.					
EARTHENWARE—A complete drug, badly assorted.					
DRUGS—					
Arrowroot, Sandwich Island	}	0	0	2½	
Do. E. I.					
Do. West India, 5d.					
Arsenic, powdered, per ton		£14	16	0	0
Bi-carbonate soda, ton		14	0	0	0
Brimstone, Flower Sulphur		0	0	3½	0
Cream Tartar	1s. 6d. to	0	1	8	
Opium	£1 to	1	2	0	
Pearl Ash		0	0	9	
Quinine, unsaleable	7s. to	0	8	0	
Strychnine	9s. to	0	10	0	
Sulp. Acid	3d. to	0	0	4	
Tartaric Acid, per lb. sells at		0	1	3	
Epsom Salts, nominal, no sale.					
FRUITS—					
Apples, dried, per lb		0	0	6	
Peaches, dried, best in cks.		0	0	6	
Prunes, Bordeaux	10d. to	0	1	0	
Figs, per lb.		0	0	8	
Currants per lb.		0	0	10	
Almonds, soft shelled		0	0	8	
Walnuts		0	0	8	
Raisins, Muscatel		0	0	8	
Ginger, Canton, pres. pr. case, 24s. to		1	6	0	
Jams, English, 1lb. jars					
	1s. 4d. to	0	1	6	
Jelly, Curr., 2lb. tins, doz.					
	18s. to	1	0	0	
Brandy fruits, quarts		1	1	0	
Pie fruits, quarts	15s. to	0	16	0	
Lemon Syrup		0	14	0	

FISH—		£	s.	d.	
Salmon, tierces and brls. 3¾d. to		0	0	4	
Do. pickled, in jars		0	1	3	
Do. fresh, in 1 lb. tins		0	1	8	
Lang, per lb.	2d. to	0	0	2½	
Cod, dull	1d. to	0	0	1½	
Mackerel, No. 1, half-barrel, no sale.					
Herrings, Scotch, per firkin		0	6	0	
Do. red, per box of 25					
	2s. to	0	2	6	
FURNITURE—					
Worth about invoice price, badly assorted.					
GLASSWARE—Slow of sale.					
GRAIN—					
Wheat, col. 60 lb. to bushel, none.					
English or Baltic, none.					
Oats, V.D.L., 40 lb. to bushel		0	9	0	
Do. Prime Scotch, 40 do.					
	9s. 6d. to	0	10	6	
Oats, American,		0	7	0	
Barley, Chile, 52lb. none		0	5	3	
Barley, English,		0	10	0	
Bran, 20lb. to bushel	4s. to	0	4	3	
Yellow maize, whole		0	10	0	
Peas, split, cwt.		1	15	0	
Indian grain, cwt.		0	14	6	
GUNPOWDER—					
English blasting, scarce					
	1s. 6d. to	0	1	9	
Hall's glass, FFF, 40 per cent. on invoice.					
GLUE—					
London, per lb. (scarce) 7d. to		0	0	8	
HAY—Pressed, per ton					
Adelaide,	}	£14	16	0	0
Van Dieman's Land,					
HOPS—					
Kent, per lb.	1s. 9d. to	0	2	3	
American do., choice sample					
	1s 3d to	0	1	5	
V. D. L.		0	1	8	
HARDWARE—					
Shovels, Am. L. H. doz.					
	£1 16 to	2	0	0	
Spades (scarce)		2	10	0	
Axes, saleable	£3 to	3	10	0	
Picks, Collins', light		3	0	0	
Assorted invoice, shelf hardware nominal					
Cooking Stoves, invoice price, season over					
Camp ovens, per ton		15	0	0	
Fowling-pieces					
Revolvers, Colts, 4 to 6 in. } a complete					
Ditto Deane's } drug.					
Clout nails per lb., scarce,					
	1s. 3d. to	0	1	6	
Cut t cks, per paper		0	0	3	

IRON per ton—	£ s. d.	PRESERVES, continued—	£ s. d.
Staffordshire, sorted . . .	15 0 0	Pickles, in quarts, doz. . .	10s. to 0 12 0
Pig, very scarce . . .	10 0 0	Capers, half pints . . .	0 10 0
Corrugated, galvanized £28 to 30	0 0 0	PROVISIONS—	
Boiler plate . . .	16s. to 0 18 0	Beef, Mess, per bbl. . .	£3 15 to 4 0 0
Sheet iron, glutted . . .	£18 to 20 0 0	Pork, Irish, per bbl. sales . .	6 10 0
Houses, not in request . . .		Hams, best Yorkshire, per lb.	1s. to 0 1 1½
LEAD—		Bacon, sides, English, prime	1s. to 0 1 2
Pig . . .	none	Tongues . . .	0 0 4
Shot, wanted . . .	1 18 0	Lard, in kegs, per lb. . .	5d. to 0 0 8
Sheet, 4, 5, and 6 lbs. ton . . .	28 0 0	Butter, Cork, prime, per lb.	1s. 1d. to 0 1 2½
Pipe, well supplied . . .	30 0 0	Cheese, English, prime, lb.	1s. 1d. to 0 1 2
LEATHER— very little demand for shoe-making purposes		Do. American do. . .	0 0 10
MACHINERY— increasing demand.		Do. Dutch, do. . .	5d. to 0 0 6
MALT— English, bushel . . .	0 11 0	RICE— Java, per cwt. . .	15s. to 0 18 0
MALT LIQUORS (duty paid)—		SADDLERY—	
British bottled Ale, best brds. } 10s. to		Stocks large, 25 per cent. discount, but generally not suitable for the market.	
Do. do. Stout, ,, } 11s.		SOAP—	
<i>Cask Beer:</i>		Liverpool, cwt., Steele's, 28s. to 1 10 0	
Truman's } Porter . . .	£5 to 5 10 0	STARCH—	
Taylor's } Stout . . .	£5 10s. to 5 15 0	London, best, per lb. . .	5½ to 0 0 6
Burton Ale, Allsopp's and		SUGARS— Duty paid	
Bass's, hhd. . .	11 0 0	Mauritius, common . . .	28 0 0
MOLASSES— Ton . . .	£17 to 17 10 0	Loaf, English, per ton . . .	43 0 0
MUSTARD—		Crushed loaf sugar, per ton . .	33 10 0
English, in lb. and ½-lb. bot.		SPIRITS (In Bond)*	
per doz. . .	0 6 0	Brandy, Martell . . .	0 10 0
NAILS— Wrought, clasp, 30 to 40 per cent. advance		Rum, BP, 10 OP . . .	4s. 9d. to 0 5 0
Copper . . .	0 3 0	Gin, Dutch, pf. cases . . .	0 15 0
OIL—		Whisky, Scotch, malt, 6s. 6d. to 0 7 0	
Castor, ½ pints, doz. . .	7s. to 0 8 0	SALT— Coarse Liverpool, per ton	£4 10s. to 5 10 0
Do. quarts, doz. . .	10s. to 0 12 0	Saltpetre, E. I. refined, per lb.	7d. to 0 0 8
Linseed, boiled and raw . . .	0 5 0	SLATES— per 1000 . . .	£4 10 to 11 0 0
Salad, pints . . .	0 18 0	SPICES— Cloves . . .	0 0 7
Sperm, scarce . . .	90 0 0	Ginger, bleached, per lb. . .	0 1 3
Whale . . .	60 0 0	Pimento . . .	9d. to 0 0 10
Cocoa-nut, per ton . . .	37 0 0	Pepper . . .	4d. to 0 0 5
OAKUM—		Mace . . .	1s. 6d. to 0 1 9
Russian, per cwt. . .	£2 8s. to 2 10 0	Nutmegs . . .	2s. 6d. to 0 3 6
PAINTS—		Cassia, per lb. . .	0 1 0
White Lead, best, per ton		STATIONERY— Market full } Selling at a heavy loss.	
Turpentine, per gall, scarce . .	£40 to 44 0 0	Brown paper do. . .	
PAVEMENT— Arbroath, per foot . .	0 1 2	Printing paper do. . .	
POTATOES . . .	£12 to 18 0 0	Paper bags do. . .	4d. to 5d. per lb.
PRESERVES—		SUNDRIES—	
Oyst., barrels, 2lb. } . . .	£1 3s to 1 4 0	Blacking 50 per cent. on invoice.	
cans, doz. . .		Candlewick, lb. (glutted) . . .	9d. to 0 0 10
Do. Boson, doz. } . . .		Isinglass, finest, lb. . .	0 15 0
Lobsters, 1lb. cans . . .	1 2 0		
Do. 2lb. cans . . .	1 10 0		
Other Preserved Meats, per lb. . .	0 1 6		
Sardines, half boxes . . .	0 12 0		

* Spirits, generally, in this market, are not what they profess, and are either adulterated, or old casks with Martell or other known brands are used, and American or British spirits sold. So with Scotch whisky.

SUNDRIES, continued—

Pitch, Stockholm, barrel	£	s.	d.
Quicksilver	0	3	6
Resin, American, barrel, 19s. to	1	0	0
Tar, Stockholm, barrel	2	10	0
Thumb Blue, Colman's, scarce	0	1	4
Whiting, ton	2	10	0

TEAS—Duty paid
 Congou, ch. good quality
 £6 10s. to 6 15 0

TIMBER—

Batten deals, per foot	0	0	4
Cedar, in log, 100 feet	1	3	0
Deals, red 11 x 3, per foot	0	0	6
Cross-cut drawn floorings, 1 in. foot	0	0	1½
Laths, per 1000	0	16	0
American Timber, 1000 feet in the bay. Assorted	nominal		
Doors and Sashes, dull, 10s. to	0	12	0

TOBACCO—In Bond.

Cigars, Havana	£5	to 7	0	0
Cigars, Manilla, No. 2, 1000	50s.	to 2	12	6

(and no others will sell.)

TOBACCO, continued—

Negrohead, Barrett's, per lb.	0	2	0
Cavendish do., ½lb lumps	0	1	4

TIN—The commonest brands are chiefly used, and that for roofing.

Plates	£1 10s. to 1	16	0
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WINES—Very little good in the colony.
 Claret, in cases 16s. to 0 19 0
 Sherry and Madeira, per pipe £40 to 70 0 0

Port, in bulk, per pipe, best brands, diamond	45	0	0
Champagne	1	10	0

VINEGAR—
 Of Cyder, per gal., dull, 9d. to 0 0 10
 French white wine, gal. 2s. to 0 2 3

WOODWARE—
 American pails, per doz., dull 18s. to 1 0 0
 Brooms (wanted) £1 5s. to 1 10 0

WOODEN AND ZINC HOUSES—Utterly unsaleable.

ZINC—Rolled, ton, light, held for 42 0 0
 (heavy weights not used.)

NOTE.—Where so much per cent. is mentioned, it means so much advance on genuine invoices from first-class and known houses; all others must submit to a less advance. The advance is not made upon agents' charges, freights, cases, &c., but on the nett invoice.

IMPORT DUTIES. Rate of duty.

Ale, porter, spruce and other beer, cider and perry, the gallon	0	6
Cigars, the lb.	3	0
Coffee and Chicory, the lb.	0	2
Spirits, or strong waters of any strength, the gallon	10	0
Spirits, cordials, liqueurs, or strong waters, sweetened or mixed, the gallon	10	0
Spirits perfumed, the gallon	10	0
Sugar, raw and refined, and sugarcandy, the cwt.	6	0
Tea, the lb.	0	6
Tobacco or snuff, the lb.	2	0
Wine, the gallon	2	0
All other goods, wares, and merchandise	free	

FREE WAREHOUSING CHARGES.—Measurement goods, per ton per week, 1s. 6d. to 2s.; dead weights, 1s. to 1s. 6d.; receiving and delivering, each as one week's rent. Drawbacks none.

BONDED WAREHOUSE CHARGES.

	Housing and Marking.		Rent.		Delivery.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Pipe or Puncheon	2	6	2	0	4	6
Hogshead	1	6	1	0	2	6
Quarter-cask	1	0	0	6	1	6
Tierce of Tobacco	1	6	2	0	4	6
Keg or box, 250 lbs.	1	0	0	9	1	6
Large case of Cigars	2	6	2	0	2	6
Box of Cigars, 1000	0	2	0	2	0	3
Four-gallon case	0	4	0	3	0	6
Chest of Tea	0	4	0	2½	0	6
Coffee, per cwt.	0	3	0	2	0	3

Repack, 4s.; sample, 4s.; regauge, 2s. 6d.

Both Free and Bonded Warehouse Room is very plentiful, and much lower rates are taken for quantities.

LIGHTERAGE.—From Hobson's Bay (the Port) to Melbourne Wharf, measurement goods, per ton, 7s. 6d.; bonded goods, bricks and dead weight, 10s.; to Geelong, 10s. to 16s.

SEAMEN'S WAGES.—Coasting voyage, per month, £5 to £6; Lighters, £7 10s. to £8; Masters of ditto, £18 (finding themselves); Masters of Steamers in river trade, £20 to £25; Mates, £14; First and Second Engineers, £20 to £30; Firemen, £16. To Calcutta, by run, £25 to £30; to Callao, £5 per month.

FREIGHTS.—To London: Wool, per lb., 1d.; Tallow, per ton, 50s.; Gold, per oz., in quantities of or above 3000, 4d., under that quantity, 6d.; Dead weight, per ton, 40s. to 50s.* To Liverpool: Flour, 2s. to 2s. 6d. per brl. (none offering); Wool, per lb., $\frac{3}{4}$ d. (nominal); Light goods, 60s. per ton. To Hobart Town, 16s.; V. D. Land, timber, inwards, 10s. per 100 feet. Freight to other ports outward are nominal, there being now but little export trade.

TOWING CHARGES.—The following are the quoted prices for towing:—Towing up from Hobson's Bay to Melbourne: Vessels under 20 tons register to be charged as 20 tons; vessels registering 20 tons and under 50 tons, per ton, 3s. 6d.; from 51 to 70 tons, per ton, 2s. 10d.; from 71 to 100 tons, per ton, 2s. 3d.; from 101 to 150 tons, per ton, 2s. 1d.; from 151 to 200 tons, per ton, 2s.; 201 to 250 tons, per ton, 1s. 10d.; 251 to 300 tons, per ton, 1s. 8d.; ships' long boats, 20s. to 50s. each. Two-thirds of the above rates to be charged for towing vessels of the respective tonnage from Melbourne to Hobson's Bay. Ships towed to anchorage at Port Philip Heads, £80 to £100, according to agreement.

EXCHANGE ON LONDON.—Drafts against gold taken at 1 per cent. premium. Freight of gold by steamers, 6d. per ounce, delivered at the Bullion Office, London. Insurance $2\frac{1}{2}$ free of, or 5 per cent. to cover war risk.

RATES OF CARTAGE TO THE DIGGINGS.—Bendigo, £15 to £20 per ton; Ballarat, £12 to £15 do.; Forest Creek, £12 to £15 do.; Bryant's Ranges, £12 to £15 do.; Ovens, £25 to £30 do. During the winter months these charges are almost doubled.

BANK RATES OF EXCHANGE.—The Oriental Bank draw on Bombay, 2s. 1d. per rupee; Calcutta, 2s. 1d. do.; Madras, 2s. 1d. do.; Hong Kong and Canton, 5s. 2d. per dol.; Singapore, 5s. 1d. do.; Ceylon, $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. prem.; Mauritius, 4s. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per dol.; London, 3 per cent. prem.; Scotland and Ireland, 3 per cent. prem. Adams and Co. draw on America at 4 dol. 90 c. per £ stg. 3 days' sight, premium 5 per cent. All at 30 days' sight. Bills on Great Britain may shortly be expected to be reduced to par.

BALLASTING.—River ballast, delivered in the Bay, per ton, 6s. to 7s.; beach, do., 8s. to 9s.; stone, do., 12s. to 13s.

RATES OF MARINE ASSURANCE (guineas).—New York, goods, $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3; gold, $2\frac{1}{2}$. New Orleans, 4. San Francisco, 3. Callao, goods, 3. Batavia and Sourabaya, $2\frac{1}{2}$. Cape of Good Hope, Table Bay, goods, 3. Ceylon, $2\frac{1}{2}$. Hong Kong, $2\frac{1}{2}$; gold, $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. less. England, goods, 3; gold, $2\frac{1}{2}$. Calcutta, 3. Singapore, goods, $2\frac{1}{2}$; gold (per steamer), 2. **TIME RISKS**—3 months, 3 guineas per cent.; 6 months, 5 guineas per cent.; store ships, 4 guineas per cent. per annum; goods in store ships, 5 guineas per cent. per annum; policy, covering particulars, average $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. extra. A war risk of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. is quoted, and has been taken in a few instances.

RATES OF DISCOUNT.—On Bills not having more than 95 days to run, 7 per cent.; beyond that currency, 8 per cent.; overdrawn accounts, 10 per cent.

INTEREST ON DEPOSITS.—The Oriental Bank grants interest on deposits at the following rates:—On the daily balance at credit of a deposit account, $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum; on deposits requiring three months' notice of withdrawal, 3 per cent. per annum; do. do. do., 6 do. do. do., 4 per cent.; do. do. do., 12 do. do. do., 5 per cent.

RATES OF WAGES.—Skilled Mechanics, £1 to £1 5s. per day; Compositors, 2s. 6d. per thousand; do., per week, £7 7s.; Labourers, Building, 15s. per day; General, 8s. to 10s.; Storemen, 8s. to 10s.; Married Couples, with rations, £80 to £100 per annum; Stockkeepers, good Farm Labourers, and Ploughmen, with rations, £1 10s. to £1 15s., per week; Shepherds and Hutkeepers, with rations, £25 to £40 per annum. These rates are all a little reduced in 1855.

PRICES OF COLONIAL PRODUCE.—Gold price charged by brokers, £3 16s. 6d. to £3 17s. per oz.; Wool, first quality, 1s. 4d. to 1s. 6½d.; second quality, 1s. 1d. to 1s. 3½d.; third quality, 11d. to 1s. 0½d.; Greasy, 5d. to 7½d.; Scoured Slipes, 1s. 5d. to 1s. 6½d.; Slipes, 9d. to 10½d.; Skins, 3d. to 5d.; Tallow, 5½d.; Hides, green, 8s.; salted, 18s.

EXPENSES ON VESSELS ENTERING SINCE 1ST MAY, 1854.

TONNAGE.—On all vessels arriving in Victoria, per ton, 1s. Note.—No vessel shall pay the above duty more than once in six months; from January to June, both inclusive, and from July to December, also both inclusive.

PILOTAGE.—From without the Heads to Melbourne or Geelong, or *vice versa*, sailing vessel, 1s. 3d.; steamer, 10d.; maximum, £100; minimum, £15. From within the Heads to Melbourne or Geelong, or *vice versa*, per ton, sailing vessel, 9d.; steamer, 6d.; maximum, £60; minimum, £10. Into or out of Port Albert, per ton, sailing vessel, 9d.; steamer, 6d.; maximum, £60; minimum, £5. Into or out of all the other ports, per ton, sailing vessel, 6d.; steamer, 4d.; maximum, £40; minimum, £4. Between Melbourne and Geelong, sailing vessel, 6d.; steamer, 4d.; maximum, £40; minimum, £4.—The above rates to include two removes by the pilot.

Workmen, by piece-work, get £11 per square, of one brick thick, for work only.

For earthwork, from 3s. to 5s. per cubic yard.

Latterly, however, these absurdly high prices have declined, and it will be well for the colony when they decline still further, as building on a large scale cannot be expected at anything like such extreme rates.

Some idea, not of the state of the market, but of the improper supply, may be formed from the fact that, during the six months preceding the 20th of October last, 11,115 packages of spirits, wines, tobacco, and other articles subject to duty, were advertised in the Gazette to be sold for warehouse rent, and part of the cigars sold at 1s. 6d. the 1000. Others were abandoned for rent altogether.

The following shows the variation of price in the principal articles of consumption in the Melbourne market, during the gold era:—

	1851.		1852.		1853.		1854.	
	Jan.	July.	Jan.	Oct.	Jan.	Oct.	Jan.	July.
Wheat, per bushel	£ 0 6 0	£ 0 9 0	£ 0 5 0	£ 0 12 0	£ 0 7 6	£ 0 10 6	£ 0 13 0	£ 0 15 3
Flour, 1st quality, per ton	17 0 0	24 0 0	—	40 0 0	25 0 0	85 0 0	33 0 0	35 0 0
Ditto, 2nd quality, per ton	16 0 0	22 0 0	19 0 0	36 0 0	23 0 0	32 0 0	31 0 0	33 0 0
Bread, per 4 lb. loaf	—	0 1 0	0 1 4	—	—	0 1 9	0 1 6	0 1 9
Potatoes, wholesale, per cwt.	0 9 0	0 7 0	0 12 0	0 17 0	0 17 0	0 6 0	0 6 0	0 4 0
Ditto, retail, per lb.	0 0 2	0 0 2	0 0 3	New, 10	0 0 6	0 2 0	0 6 0	0 0 4
Butter, fresh, per lb.	—	—	0 2 0	0 2 0	0 3 0	0 4 0	0 4 0	0 5 0
Ditto, salt, per lb.	—	—	—	—	—	0 1 6	0 1 6	0 3 0
Milk, per quart	—	—	—	—	—	0 1 6	0 1 6	0 2 6
Cheese	—	—	—	—	—	0 1 6	0 1 3	0 1 1
Eggs, per dozen	0 1 0	0 2 0	0 2 0	0 2 0	0 6 0	0 5 0	0 6 0	0 10 0
Fowls, per couple	0 4 0	0 3 6	0 3 0	0 16 0	0 14 0	0 14 0	1 0 0	0 14 0
Geese, each	0 7 0	0 5 0	0 5 0	0 10 0	1 0 0	0 16 0	1 0 0	0 15 0
Turkeys, each	0 6 0	0 6 0	0 7 0	0 10 0	1 0 0	0 16 0	1 0 0	0 2 0 0
Ducks, per couple	0 5 0	0 5 0	0 4 0	0 14 0	0 16 0	0 14 0	1 4 0	1 4 0
Pigeons, per brace	0 1 8	0 1 6	0 1 6	0 4 0	—	—	—	—
Onions, dried, retail, per lb.	0 0 4	0 0 3	0 0 9	0 0 6	0 0 4	0 1 4	0 1 0	0 1 6
Carrots, per bunch	0 0 1	0 0 14	0 0 2	0 0 4	0 0 6	0 0 8	0 1 0	0 0 8
Cabbages, each	0 0 2	0 0 3	0 0 1	0 1 6	0 2 0	0 2 0	0 5 0	0 1 6
Peas, per quart	0 0 4	—	0 0 2	0 1 6	0 0 10	0 2 6	—	0 2 0
French beans, per lb.	0 0 4	—	0 0 3	—	0 1 0	—	0 2 6	—
Oats, per bushel	0 5 0	0 4 9	0 5 9	—	—	0 8 6	0 11 0	0 11 6
Barley, per bushel	—	0 4 0	0 4 0	—	—	0 12 0	0 9 0	0 10 6

The future of the colony is now in the hands of the colonists themselves. If the resources of the colony are to be developed, it must be by the colonists. The short-sighted policy of neglecting everything, with the object only of making immediate profits, is sadly injurious to the great interests of the colony. Railways, tramways, and docks are indispensable, and would produce profits to the individual shareholders as well as to the public, to an extent undreamed-of and impossible at home.

We are so situated that we are the natural centre of a cluster of the most thriving colonies ever founded. To the west we have South Australia, which supplies us with hay, flour, bran, &c. To the east we have New South Wales, sending us coals, timber, cattle, horses, and fruits. To the south is Tasmania, which has now discarded its old convict name of Van Dieman's Land—may we hope she has also discarded the leaven of vagabondism for which she has an unhappy pre-eminence; she supplies us with timber, hay, oats, flour, potatoes, onions, fruits, horses, and poultry. Alas, that the fruits of the convict system should be here so abundant! The timber seldom measures over half what it is sold for; the trusses of hay are made up inside of refuse, and sometimes with large stones; the flour is mixed with sour flour, imported from Melbourne for the purpose. The consequence

is that the produce from other places brings a higher price, and their dishonesty and folly is visited on their own heads. Still, the pleasure of cheating is too great for the old convict: he would rather cheat and lose by it, than give up the idea of preying on his neighbour. The misfortune is, that there are many honest men who suffer with the guilty in the general mistrust with which everything, *desirable* or otherwise, that comes from Tasmania is viewed.

To the north we have the Murray with its tributaries, opening up thousands of miles of navigable waters through a country capable of growing cotton, silk, sugar, coffee, and other tropical products; but as yet occupied only by a few squatters and herds of cattle. Then beyond we have New Zealand, supplying us with its rope, flour, potatoes, and timber, which latter is unequalled for masts and spars for shipping; the Indian Archipelago, with its thousand islands densely peopled; the east coast of Africa, India, and China; and the west coast of America. To all of these countries we have now a regular trade; in its infancy, it is true, but already giving promise of a great future.

Melbourne, with its harbour, large enough for all the shipping in the world, is the natural central depôt for all these countries—the heart from which the life-blood of the commerce of the southern world must circulate—the grand central exchange in which the merchants of the east, even now, most do congregate.

One of the greatest difficulties we have now to contend with is want of dock accommodation. All goods have to be conveyed to and from the shipping, in lighters, at an enormous cost to the colony. The *Argus* of 26th October estimates this at two and a-half millions; but supposing this is an extreme estimate, and say half, or one and a quarter millions, almost the whole of this sum would be saved to the colony by proper dock accommodation. But this is not the chief loss. Instead of sending home our shipping in ballast, as at present, we might fill them all with return cargoes of timber for ship-building, equal to the best English oak for knees, and of the largest sizes. Iron stone, copper ore, tin ore, are all abundant, and only require tramways and dock accommodation to render them profitable for export.

Even with all the difficulties of shipping goods, a considerable

export trade is now carried on to all the adjoining colonies; and the advantage of having one great central depôt, where large stocks are always kept, is already appreciated. The great hindrance, I repeat, is the want of dock accommodation.

I do not, however, consider that the future is quite safe, and that no danger is to be feared: a continuation of imports so injudicious as those sent, must produce another crisis more serious than the last; and whether the colonial or British merchant be the chief sufferer, it will be an evil to the colony, which is interested in having a regular and equal supply of those goods required. We have nothing to fear for many years to come of any failure in the supply of gold, as it is known that vast regions, similar in all respects to those already worked, are only waiting for new parties to prospect them, and to open up the hidden treasures. Nor will the value of gold further decline, at least not to affect prices of land and colonial produce to the extent it has already done. Prices will rather have a tendency to fall than to rise, and the extreme profits which have hitherto been made will fall to a regular remunerative profit to the merchant and shopkeeper.

The wool, which, next to the gold, is the chief article of export, and, indeed, is now almost the only other article of importance—amounting in 1853 to £1,651,871, or to about one-seventh part of the whole supply of gold—may be increased to almost any extent, not only by opening up new country known to exist, but by sowing new grasses on the stations now occupied.

The following is extracted from a report on the wool (English) market:—

“The quantities of *wool* imported (sheep, lamb, and alpaca) have steadily increased from less than 50 million lbs. in 1840, to nearly 120 millions in 1853 and 106 millions last year. In that period the Spanish imports have *decreased* from $1\frac{1}{2}$ million lbs. to less than half a million; the German from 22 millions to $11\frac{1}{2}$. But the South African imports have *increased* from three quarters of a million lbs. to $8\frac{1}{2}$ millions; the East Indian from $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions to 15 millions; and the Australian from 10 millions to $47\frac{1}{2}$. The history of wool production in our south-eastern possessions is one of the most remarkable in the whole history of commerce. In the fifteen years, the Cape product has increased tenfold; the East

Indian sevenfold; and the Australian nearly fivefold. Fifteen years ago Australia furnished less than a tenth of the European supply—now it furnishes nearly a half of a supply that has been more than doubled, giving us almost as much as we received fifteen years ago from all the world together. We may add that, in spite of the gold-finding, the quantity of wool sent from Australia was much greater in the last two years than in any preceding.”

We have purposely omitted to speak of the gold produced in Victoria; but the following remarks, extracted from the report of Mr. Selwyn, the Government geologist, cannot but prove interesting:—

“The best guide in searching for auriferous tracts, is, I believe, the existence of quartz veins. In districts where little or no dislocation and disturbance of the strata has taken place, and where consequently few or no quartz veins have been formed, it is highly improbable that much gold would be discovered. In such districts, on the other hand, where a very considerable amount of upheaval, metamorphism, and dislocation of the strata has been effected, and in consequence numerous and extensive quartz veins may have been formed, the probabilities are highly in favour of the existence of gold and other metalliferous deposits. This is borne out by the position and course of all the richest worked gold-fields, which are invariably found following and gradually extending themselves on the bearing of some extensive system of quartz veins, such as those of Mount Franklyn, Forest Creek, and Bendigo, or Ballarat, Daisy Hill, and Korong, with intervening granitic tracts, such as that extending from the Coliban to the Loddon, through Mount Alexander and Tarrengower.

“A good many theories have lately been advanced with respect to the origin of these auriferous quartz veins. I have before stated my opinion, that they are the source whence the whole of the gold now found in diluvial drift has been derived. With respect to their age and origin, at least in the Bendigo, Forest Creek, Tarrengower, Korong, and Daisy Hill districts, I believe that they, or more properly the fissures and cracks they now occupy, are either contemporaneous with, and the result of, the upheaval and dislocation of the older palæozoic strata, caused by the intrusion of the granites now seen on the surface; or, that they are the result of

dislocations and upheavals which had affected these older sedimentary deposits prior to the formation of these granitic masses, by the intrusion of which they (the quartz veins) have been cut of.

* * * * *

“ With respect to the permanency of the supply of gold, I have no hesitation in stating my belief—

“ 1st. That the gold-fields of Victoria will prove as permanent a source of wealth to this colony as the tin and copper mines of Cornwall to Great Britain.

“ 2nd. That there are hundreds of square miles of country yet untouched by the pick of the digger, which present all the geological and surface indications of the existence of gold in as marked a degree as any one of the present known and worked gold-fields.

“ The great longitudinal extent of the auriferous deposits is a fact not difficult of explanation, when we regard what appears to be the general geological structure of the country, which, in making a section from east to west, or from the Australian Alps to the Pyrenees and Grampians, is found to consist of a succession of steep hills, ranges, and gullies, composed of an enormous thickness (30,000 feet or more) of upheaved and contorted palæozoic and older strata, intercepted by great masses of granitic and other apparently non-auriferous plutonic rocks, with extensive intervening tracts of recent igneous or volcanic rocks, forming plains and table-lands, also non-auriferous, but, in all probability, often resting on and concealing auriferous deposits.”

Names of vessels which have made a passage from England to Australia under 80 days :—Eagle; Marco Polo; Kent; Red Jacket; Mermaid; Neleus; Star of the East; Nova Bella; Walter Hood; Planet; Crest of the Waves; Invincible; Forest Queen; Lord of the Isles; Granite City; Lightning; Edward Johnson; Chusan; Calcutta; Sovereign of the Seas; Queen of the Seas. Steam-ships outwards :—Great Britain, 65 days 12 hours; Golden Age, 64 days; Victoria, 69 days; Argo, 64 days. Argo, homewards, last voyage, 64 days; Great Britain, homewards, 73 days; Eagle, clipper ship, last voyage, 76 days.

The following is the scale of commercial charges at Melbourne :—

COMMISSIONS.

On cash payments when not in funds	5 per cent.
On cash payments when in funds	2½ per cent.
On purchase and shipment of gold dust	1 per cent.
On purchase and shipment of gold dust, if drawn against	2½ per cent.

On the amount of Invoice in either case.

On purchase and shipment of merchandise, and on other purchases when not in funds	5 per cent.
Ditto ditto when in funds	2½ per cent.
On private sales, including the purchase of bills for remittance	5 per cent.
On guarantee of sales, including remittances	5 per cent.
On goods received and forwarded, and on consignments of merchandise withdrawn, on invoice value	2½ per cent.
On debts, rents, and other accounts collected, recovered, and remitted	5 per cent.
On granting of letters of credit	2½ per cent.
On letters of credit acted upon, an additional charge	2½ per cent.
On freight or charter procured for vessels, and freight or passage money collected	5 per cent.
On ship's disbursements and outfits	5 per cent.
On money obtained on bottomry or respondentia	5 per cent.
On insurance effected, or orders written for insurance, on the assured value	½ per cent.
On insurance losses, partial or total, settled, or on premiums recovered	2½ per cent.

All sales of goods understood to be guaranteed, unless there be special orders to the contrary.

Guarantee or security for contracts	5 per cent.
Acting as trustee on assignments	5 per cent.
On advances on produce for shipment	2½ per cent.
Advances and current accounts not liquidated at the end of the season, March 31st, the balance to be charged as a fresh advance, subject to a commission of	5 per cent.

INTEREST.

On advance for duties or freight	8 per cent.
On accounts	10 per cent.

CHARGES.

For passing accounts with the Government for emigrant ships, where the whole of the freight is payable in England	£21
For checking expenditure accounts on behalf of charterers of passenger vessels, and granting certificates	£21
In all cases where the net amount of commission on freight is under £50, in lieu thereof	£50
For entering ship inwards at the Custom House, when the original port of departure is Australia, Van Dieman's Land, or New Zealand	£2 2s.
For clearing ship outwards when the port of destination is in the same places as above	£2 2s.
For entering ship inwards from other ports	£5 5s.

For clearing ship outwards	£5 5s.
For attending delivery of cargo from lighters, and giving notice to consignees	15s. per day
Fee for each surveyor within the city	£2 2s.
Ditto ditto in Hobson's Bay and Williamstown	£2 2s.
On wool, for receiving, weighing, marking, and delivering	¼d. per lb.
In addition to the tare on wool, an allowance for a draught of	1lb. per cwt.

A Chamber of Commerce has lately been established in Melbourne. The objects proposed by this association are to watch over and protect the general interests of commerce, to collect information on all matters of interest to the mercantile community, and to use every means within its power for the removal of evils, the redress of grievances, and the promotion of the common good; to communicate with authorities and individual parties thereupon; to form a code of practice whereby the transaction of business may be simplified and facilitated; to receive references, and to arbitrate between disputants—the decisions in such references being recorded for future guidance. All persons engaged or interested in the commerce or shipping of Melbourne are admissible as members; and the business and funds of the Chamber are arranged by a committee of twenty-one members, consisting of a President and Vice-President, and nineteen members, elected annually, in the month of April.

CHAPTER III.

MELBOURNE: ITS PEOPLE AND ITS WEALTH.

EIGHTEEN years ago the ground on which now stands the city of Melbourne, the capital of the colony of Victoria, was unreclaimed from the wilderness of Nature. On the 1st of June 1837, the first plot of land was sold. For a long time it was but thinly populated, a house here and there standing out from the trees of the forest, and its inhabitants few and far between. Now it is covered with warehouses, shops and offices, and teems with an industrious and thriving population—an instance of prosperity and success unparalleled in the history of nations. The city of Melbourne is well built, and contains many handsome edifices. The present building act permits no wooden erections to be put up, unless kept back at least their own height from the street, or from any other buildings; which restriction has had a most beneficial effect in preventing fires; and Melbourne now presents a striking contrast to San Francisco and the other American cities, which have been periodically destroyed by fires. The few which have taken place have seldom spread beyond the buildings in which they originated. Fires are certainly not more prevalent than in large towns in England; insurances, notwithstanding, are about ten times the rate charged in England.

Eighteen months ago the city contained the chief portion of the town population: now the population is to be found in the suburbs, of which Collingwood is the oldest and largest. Collingwood is inhabited by many of the most respectable merchants and shopkeepers; but it consists chiefly of lodging-houses for clerks and other young men engaged in the city. It also has a mechanics' institute, six churches, a theatre and music room, and several very good hotels.

Richmond, another large suburb, is now nearly built up to Collingwood, and is separated from the city by the government paddock, or park. Many handsome houses are now built here on the high ground; the lower ground is occupied chiefly by a common class of wooden buildings, inhabited by workmen, draymen, and others. It has four churches, some good hotels and Cremorne gardens; it is bounded on two sides by the Yarra-Yarra river, whose opposite bank is adorned with many handsome villas. Beyond, on the lowland, is the village of Prahran, chiefly built of wood. It has five churches, several hotels, a mechanics' institute, &c. Windsor lies between Prahran and St. Kilda, and is similar to Prahran. St. Kilda is beautifully situated on the rising ground fronting the bay, and is inhabited by wealthy shopkeepers, merchants, lawyers, &c., who drive or ride into town every morning. The road leading to Melbourne, about three miles long, is as crowded as the City Road in London; omnibuses run from eight in the morning, and, for some hours afterwards, start every few minutes, filled with passengers. The tolls on this road were let for £6,000 for six months; the rates are 3d. for one horse, 6d. for two. Returning to the city by this road we leave Prahran and Windsor on the right, and South Melbourne, or Emerald Hill, on the left. This is now quite a large town, with its two churches, mechanics' institute, hotels and shops of its own. A moving bridge across the Yarra-Yarra, at the foot of King-street, would unite this suburb with Melbourne, and reduce the distance from a mile and a half to a few hundred yards. Further to the left lies Sandridge, occupied principally by workmen engaged in the shipping in the bay close by. This place has a great reputation for fleas, which can be seen hopping in the sand in myriads, a plague equal to that inflicted on Pharaoh. So great is the annoyance from these lively little animals, that long boots are worn by the workmen over their trousers to prevent them getting into their clothes. Sandridge is connected with Melbourne by a good road, as well as a railway, and has two jetties for landing goods, two saw-mills, and several hotels.

Williamstown lies on the other side of the arm of the bay, in which the shipping anchor, and is just such another place as Sandridge—without the fleas. It has several good warehouses

and churches, and drives a profitable trade in all things connected with shipping.

North Melbourne is the most recent of all the suburbs, and the most rapid in its growth. This, like the other new suburbs, is not included in the building act, and is consequently composed principally of wooden and iron buildings, of a superficial description; and the wonder is that fire has done so little damage to these suburbs, composed as they are of such inflammable material.

The total population of Melbourne and its suburbs may be estimated at from 70,000 to 100,000. Nearly all the places mentioned as suburbs to Melbourne have been built within the last two years. Previous to their erection, a few scattered cottages, with a spare population, alone disputed possession of the fields with the gum-trees, the wild opossum, and the painted parrot.

Two years ago (1852-53), the new-comer was glad to put up his tent in Canvas-town, and considered himself lucky if he got a small wooden cottage, of two rooms, at a rent of three or four pounds a-week. Now, a substantial brick or stone house, of five or six apartments, well plastered and finished, can be obtained for the same money. Then a female servant was not to be had; now domestics of every description can be hired at regular fixed rates of wages, which, though very high as compared with those paid in Europe, are small to what they were in 1852 and 1853. Then the abundance of gold, the erroneous notions entertained of the wealth of the diggers who came down to Melbourne, and the scarcity of everything, caused every article of food and clothing to rise greatly in price; now, the regular operations of trade have counteracted the evil.

The sudden and unexampled rise and prosperity of the city of Melbourne has, in a few years, produced effects which it takes centuries to accomplish in the settled countries of Europe. Already has the population far outgrown the city; and now most of the shopkeepers and merchants reside in the suburbs, or in the beautiful marine villages of St. Kilda or Brighton.

The value of property in the city is too great to admit of its occupation as dwelling houses. First floors in Collins Street, the Wharf, and other principal business situations, have, for these last

two years, let for offices at fabulous rates, and single rooms at from five to ten pounds each per week. A considerable fall has lately, however, taken place in the rents of houses and shops in Melbourne. A shop in Bourke Street, which formerly let for £100 per week, can now be hired for £60. In the principal streets from £500 to £5,000 have been the rates of annual rental; one-fourth of this rate is, however, likely to be about the future rent. These enormous rents were not felt by the old colonists in the same degree as by the new "chums," who in some cases had brought stocks of goods with them, and were compelled to pay the enormous rates demanded, or remain out of business entirely. The latter would, in many cases, have been the more prudent course, and have saved many embarrassments and bankruptcies. The wonder is that any new business, paying such a rent, could answer at all; and yet it is well known that many have done well, and even made immense fortunes by trade, in spite of all drawbacks.

I have already said that Melbourne and its suburbs contain many handsome and well-built churches, banking-houses, club-houses, literary institutions, hotels, and private dwellings; but I have yet to mention the Exhibition building, which, for beauty of design and rapidity of construction, may even vie with its great prototype in Hyde Park—that is, if we may compare small things with great.

Melbourne has also its railways in full operation. The Hobson's Bay Railway is now running its half-hourly trains; besides which, a splendid road leads to the Bay at Sandridge. Twelve months ago communication between the latter place and Melbourne was almost cut off, except by the winding and over-crowded river. I myself saw an ox go plump head-over-heels in one of the holes of what was then called the road to Sandridge. A company is also formed for constructing a ship canal, and forming docks, which will be a third direct mode of communication with the Bay. A fourth road to the Bay will be the Williamstown railway, which is rapidly progressing. The electric telegraph from Williamstown has now been some months in operation. Other great undertakings are also in progress. A large reservoir is being formed on the Plenty river, to supply the city and suburbs with water by

means of pipes laid on to the houses. The Yan-Yean reservoir, for supplying Melbourne with water, will cover about 1,400 acres—which reminds one of the great works of the Assyrians—and is the largest artificial lake in the world. The whole of the works are expected to be finished in 1856. The water is to be filtered before being distributed in Melbourne, and is said by Dr. Maud to be purer than any water he had tested in Europe. If this is so, I do not quite see the use of filtering it. Gas will soon make its appearance in the streets of Melbourne; and the principal thoroughfares are now being laid down with stone brought from Caithness, Arbroath, and the adjoining colonies. Churches, mechanics' institutions, public free libraries, and other useful and splendid structures, rise simultaneously with the increase of the population—but to mention all the buildings, great stores, &c., either built or in course of progress, would occupy too much space. I cannot omit, however, to mention the Melbourne University, the foundation-stone of which has been laid amid the acclamations of thousands of citizens. A few more years, and Melbourne, if it progresses at its present rate, will not be surpassed for size, beauty, wealth, and greatness, by many capitals of the old world.

The population of Melbourne presents a most curious and picturesque exhibition of the people of all nations. Here the swart Briton, having put off the delicate notions contracted in luxurious cities of the old country, walks shoulder to shoulder with the flat-faced Chinaman, the tall and stately Armenian, the lithe New Zealander or South Sea Islander, the merry African from the United States, the grave Spaniard, the yellow-haired German, the tall, sharp-visaged Yankee, and the lively Frenchman. In fact, every state in the world has its representative in the diggings of Victoria and the streets of Melbourne. As in other cases, the wild animals and the native inhabitants of the soil seem to have almost melted away and disappeared as soon as the foot of the white man invaded their hitherto sacred haunts.

The populace of Melbourne have already acquired several colonial peculiarities. For instance, most diggers, draymen, bullock drivers, or labourers, wear their one or two large gold rings; and luxuriate in extensive beards and moustaches. A blue

flannel shirt, a belt round the waist with brass buckle; and straw hat, form the chief part of their dress; add to this, high knee boots, and a gay-coloured handkerchief tied loosely round the neck, and you have the picture before you of a working man in Melbourne. In fact, every extravagance and peculiarity of costume is indulged in at pleasure by the dwellers in this remarkable country.

The most troublesome, if not the most criminal part of the population of Melbourne and the Australian gold diggings come from California, and other American States. But I will not insult America by fathering her with such sons: the fact is, that these people consist of the most ignorant and depraved of our own countrymen, and the outcasts of Europe, who, to their other accomplishments, have added the peculiar vices of the worst parts of the American people. These people have been the prime agitators of disturbances at the diggings; and at one of the large meetings they had the audacity to hoist the American flag over the British; but to the credit of the diggers, they instantly brought it to its proper level. Their political creed consists in condemning everything British, and with ignorant effrontery on British soil, to uphold as perfect everything American. In the towns, also, they have given much trouble. One was lately fined £50, and the Court regretted it could not make the penalty heavier, for committing an assault upon a man of colour, whom this white barbarian ejected from a place of public amusement for no other reason than that he was black! A publican, also, of this class, lately struck out a poor man's eye, whose only fault was refusing to pay sixpence for a common clay pipe. Even one of the merchants, who had previously maintained a respectable character, so far forgot himself as to assault the sheriff's officer who had boarded his ship, in the execution of his duty. Rules prohibiting smoking in public rooms had to be made for the sole benefit of these boasting, swaggering, unmannerly, would-be Yankees.

“Old chums” and “New chums” are the terms used in Victoria to designate old and new comers. Three years were required to make an old chum, who was expected in that time to cultivate a moustache, and to wear a dirty, cabbage-tree hat. The old chum then considered himself bound to look upon the new chum

with the most supercilious contempt and pity. These days have passed, and an old chum is now a curiosity; the new-comers have outnumbered them. The last effort to keep their ground was at an "Old Chums' Dinner," where, fortunately, they quarrelled amongst themselves, and after smashing glasses, mirrors, &c., separated never to meet again.

I have endeavoured to describe the change which has taken place in household accommodation in Melbourne, and also the greater facility for now procuring good domestics; house rent and servants' wages are, however, still the great expense of a family in Melbourne. Rents are now about five times greater than home rents, and servants' wages are four times home rates. Butchers'-meat, bread, and other necessaries, on an average of the whole, may be put down at one-half more than home rates. Clothing of every sort can at present be bought at very little more than home rates. The following prices are from the "Argus" price list, at the end of 1854:—

RETAIL MARKET.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.—This market continues to be supplied with first-class vegetables, which alone are found to be profitable to the producer. Brocoli, of fifty to seventy pounds weight, and of delicious flavour, and edible to the stalk, are by no means unfrequent in the windows of the dealers. Potatoes are very scarce. Fruits are beginning to make their appearance; some very fine strawberries and green gooseberries have been sold during the present week in small quantities. The fruit crops in the neighbourhood give promise of an abundant yield.

The prices charged by retail dealers are as follows:—Lettuces, 4s. to 6s. per dozen; cauliflowers, 6d. to 2s. per head; cabbages, 6d. to 2s. per head; peas, 9d. per quart; celery, out; French beans, 1s. per lb.; spring onions, 6d. per bundle; carrots, 8d. per ditto; turnips, nearly out, 5d. per ditto; parsnips, 6d. per ditto; radishes, 6d. per ditto; potatoes, 6d. per lb.; new potatoes, 8d. per ditto; asparagus, 1s. 6d. per bundle; rhubarb, 9d. per ditto; spinach, scarce, 2s. 3d. per dish; onions, 1s. 6d. per lb.; leeks, 6d. per bundle; cress, 6d. per bunch; beet, 1s. per head; lemons, 4s. to 6s. per dozen; oranges, 3s. per ditto; apples, 2s. per lb.; green gooseberries, 2s. per quart; strawberries, 5s. per lb.

POULTRY continues scarce.—Geese, 25s. to 30s. each; hen turkeys, 30s. ditto; cock ditto, 40s. ditto; ducks, 24s. per pair; fowls, 20s. per ditto; wild ducks, 14s. per couple; teal, 6s. per couple; eggs, 4s. per dozen.

BUTCHERS' MEAT.—Beef, 7d. to 9d. per lb.; mutton, 7d. to 10d.; pork, 1s. 4d. to 1s. 8d.; veal, 8d. to 1s.; lamb, 8d. to 10d.

DAIRY PRODUCTS.—Butter, fresh, imported, 2s. per lb.; dairy, 3s. 6d. to 4s. 6d. per lb.; milk, 1s. 6d. to 2s. per quart.

BREAD.—Many bakers charge 1s. 9d., but generally the price remains at 1s. 6d. the 4-lb. loaf; flour, 5d. per lb.; best ditto, 6½ per lb.

If I could tell a tenth part of the wonders of Australian wealth, the statement would appear so exaggerated, that few at home would believe my statements. Men with incomes of from £5,000 to £50,000 per annum, are as common in Victoria as bakers' boys in London—you meet them in every street. The banks, to some extent, indicate the ready-money on hand; six of them hold deposits to the amount of £6,161,118, for which they pay no interest; but the annual incomes from property can only be got at by individual inquiry.

Farmers at home will scarcely credit the statement, that farms of small extent have yielded to their lucky holders a clear profit of from £3,000 to £5,000 per annum. Hay, however, at £40 per ton, and vegetables, poultry, butter, milk, &c., at the rates stated in the Retail Price List already given, soon make up the sum.

Land in the suburbs, which a few years ago was worth nothing, is now found to be worth £16 to £40 per foot, of about 150 feet deep; and this not in one or two cases, but generally. One man who had to make an assignment of his estate to his creditors, omitted a few pieces which were thought of no value, and which he has since sold at £16 per foot; and he claims from his trustee no less than £6,000 of a balance, all of which has been realized by the advance in the price of land. The best city lots were sold, eighteen years ago, for £40 to £50, and are now worth from £40,000 to £50,000. The corner of Bourke Street and Swanston Street sold for £210 per foot.

During the gold fever, the history of some of the town lots would of itself fill a volume. They have passed through many hands—at one time in the hands of the proud and haughty, at another in those of the humble colonist; now worth nothing, and again worth thousands. At one time some were not worth the lawyer's and the surveyor's bills for sub-dividing them into speculative building lots, and making their titles.

It may be worthy of remark, that there are very few, if any, pawnbrokers' shops, or old clothes shops. The grocers do here a different description of trade from that done at home. Instead of ounces of tea, and quarter-pounds of sugar, these articles are sold to the colonists in pounds and hundredweights. Everything

tends to indicate the great wealth of the people, notwithstanding that many cases of individual suffering are still to be found. No beggars are to be seen in Australia, and no one can be said to suffer from want.

It is not easy to understand how accounts of Melbourne get access into papers of a high order of editorial talent, such as "Chambers' Journal"—which, in 1853, informed the public that "a humble meal at a cook-shop cost 12s." The truth is, that at the Club Hotel, the best in Melbourne, they were charging, at and since that date, only 3s. 6d. for their mid-day ordinary, consisting of some dozen dishes; and 6s. for a first-rate dinner, at six P. M., of four courses. The same authority says—"A single room to lodge in costs £2 10s. per week." Now working men could always get good board and lodging for 30s. per week in Melbourne. Again—"the poorest horse will cost £200." I bought a first-rate roadster for £33, which carried me sixty miles in one day; and horses of this class could always be had from £10 to £60. The whole article is erroneous in its facts and false in its conclusions, and seems likely to have misled many of its readers who wished to emigrate. The same may also be said of some papers in Dickens' "Household Words," and the "Leisure Hour"—articles evidently either written at home, from information derived from newspaper paragraphs, or the production of ill-informed persons.

Melbourne has three daily newspapers, the *Argus*, the *Herald*, and the *Age*, and one weekly, the *Express*. They are all respectably conducted. The *Argus* has a circulation of 13,000 daily. Geelong has one daily paper; Portland has two; Bendigo, one; Castlemain, one. Besides these, there are several other newspapers and periodicals published in the colony, which, however meretorious, are still far behind the literary productions of the old country, whose *Times*, and *Illustrated News*, are eagerly sought for on the arrival of every mail.

In Victoria, 20 copies of newspapers are printed annually for each individual; in the United States, 18 for each individual; in the United Kingdom, 3½ for each individual.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RESOURCES OF VICTORIA.

THE colony of Victoria is of about the same extent as Great Britain ; but in its natural resources it must be admitted to be much more highly favoured. The mother country supports a population of more than twenty millions ; the colony has not at this moment more than three hundred thousand inhabitants. How great, then, the room for immigration for years to come, and how vast the prospect of future commercial prosperity !

Previous to the discovery of gold in Australia, and even at the present time, wool must be considered the most valuable production of Victoria. In 1849, there was produced a total quantity of 14,567,005 lbs., which may be valued at £574,594 ; in 1853, the quantity raised was 21,965,104 lbs., the value of which was £1,651,871. Thus it will be seen that the value of this staple article has increased nearly threefold, notwithstanding the fact that the search after gold, to a certain extent, crippled agricultural enterprise in Victoria ; and, in the face of the outcry of the squatters that they would be ruined by the gold diggers, this increased supply of wool must be looked upon as a most remarkable fact. But these figures by no means show the real increase in the value of the Australian squatter's stock ; for, while the entire carcass of the sheep was formerly worth nothing, or at most not more than 1½d. per lb., mutton has since been sold at 10d. per lb., though 7d. is now about the average price for both that and beef.

In 1853, there were reared in the colony, 34,021 horses, 431,380 horned cattle, 8,996 pigs, and 6,551,506 sheep,—a total quantity which gives nearly twenty-two sheep for every individual ; while in Great Britain about one and a-half is the proportion to each individual.

But though Land, Labour, and Gold are the true sources of wealth in Victoria, the latter is certainly the most productive. The following may be considered the most correct estimate of the quantity and value of the precious metal raised in Victoria the last four years:—

1851.—Quantity, 145,146 oz., 14 dwts., 16 grains. Value, £508,013 11s. 4d.

1852.—Quantity, 1,974,975 oz., 15 dwts., 1 grain. Value, £6,912,415 2s. 7d.

1853.—Quantity, 2,497,723 oz., 15 dwts., 16 grains. Value, £9,366,464 3s. 9d.

1854.—Quantity, 2,122,596 oz. Value, £8,490,384.

The above is the official return of the quantity exported and its estimated value; but a considerable quantity of gold must have left the colony in the pockets of persons returning to Great Britain and America, and by private hand. Mr. Khull, the gold broker, estimates the actual quantity raised in the colony in the four years 1851, 1852, 1853, and 1854 at 9,754,077 oz. At £4 per oz. it would be worth £38,016,308.

This is probably an over estimate, and the official return is a much safer basis to found any calculations on.

All the gold found in Victoria during the first three years, as estimated in the above official returns, could be placed in a closet 7 feet by 8 feet, and 8 feet deep. The space occupied by the ransom said to have been paid to Pizarro by the Peruvian monarch would have filled an apartment ten times as large; and although much of this ransom consisted of gold plates, which would not lie so closely as gold dust, yet at a low estimate the quantity stated must have far exceeded all the gold found in both California and Australia!

If this account be true, and if the abundance of gold produced no sensible effect on the value of the precious metal in Europe, there seems to be no reason to dread any great disturbance from a like cause, however plentiful the yield in future years.

It is supposed that about 100,000 of the population of Victoria are now engaged in the gold diggings, besides the population supported by the enormous traffic on the various roads. Several

smaller diggings are in operation; other gold fields exist on the Plenty River, about twenty-four miles from Melbourne; and one also beyond Flemington, about six miles from Melbourne; and another one at Anderson's Creek, sixteen miles from Melbourne.

The following is from the *Age* newspaper of the 8th of January last:—

“The returns from the various gold fields are still satisfactory. Mining operations continue to support large and increasing proportions of the population of the colony. We append a statement of the amounts brought down by the Government escorts during the last six weeks of 1854. The figures are in ounces:—

1854.	Mount Alexander, Bendigo, and Tar-rangower.	Ballarat.	Ovens.	Goulburn and M'ivor.	Avoca.	Maryborough.	Total.
Nov. 25	12,871	9,398	6260	771	151	4329	33,780
Dec. 2	14,147	11,509	—	—	101	2570	28,287
” 9	16,349	—	6334	—	92	3805	26,596
” 16	12,854	19,673	—	—	928	1589	35,004
” 23	18,164	11,241	5729	619	1171	967	37,891
” 30	7,120	8,068	—	—	1860	588	17,636

It is generally believed that we are as yet only entering upon our gold discoveries, and that the greater part of this colony is one vast gold field. I have already, in the chapter on Commerce, given the report of the Government geologist. The export of gold is equal to about forty pounds each for every man, woman, and child in the colony. Gold to the value of £160,000 was the average weekly yield of the Victoria mines for 1853, and it is now about the same. The Lady Hotham Nugget, recently found, is valued at £5000, and weighs 98 lbs. 9 oz. One party at Ballarat, in October, 1854, has nugged nearly one hundredweight within two days, and the claim is said to be as good as any ever wrought in Ballarat—£5000 in two days!

Agriculture has as yet received little attention; the field is open to the enterprising young farmer. He has the best of land to work upon, and the richest of customers provided for him; and the land must shortly be abundantly brought into the market for sale. It may be said that every European grain, fruit, or vegetable, will grow in the colony.

The total number of acres under cultivation in 1852 was only 16,823. Large plots of land were sold in 1853; and up to the middle of 1854—viz., 358,868 acres were disposed of. Up to September, 1854, the total number of acres of land sold in the colony amounted to 1,266,267, a large portion of which is now preparing for crops. The average price realised at the Government land sales for country land, in 1854, was £2 2s. per acre. Surely at this price (less than one year's rent of a Midlothian farmer), and with such enormous prices, some fortunes are to be made out of farming in Victoria.

The coal fields of Victoria have not yet been worked; but it is now well ascertained that, beyond Western Port, and about sixteen miles on the east of the Bass River, a supply of excellent coal exists. Our great want is capital: with all the riches of the colony, money cannot be obtained except it yields an immediate, certain, and large return. A tramway is required to the Bass River, where the coal could be easily and safely shipped in small craft. This would require £50,000, and another £5000 would be ample capital, as the coal is easily got at, and crops out on the surface. The imports for 1853 amounted to 46,255 tons, valued, at colonial prices, at £190,831. The consumption is daily increasing; but even this amount, which could be all secured, would pay the proprietors an enormous profit. Since the above was written the coal has been traced to French Island, where it can be easily shipped.

Tin ore abounds at the Ovens diggings. A company was formed for the working of this ore; but the expense of carting it prevented the speculation from yielding a profit. Perhaps it might be added, that the management was not so efficient as it might have been. This metal will, at no distant day, be a great source of wealth to the colony.

Copper, iron, and lead ores are all known to abound in the colony, and will, ere long, give employment and yield profit to many thousands of people.

Bark, hides and skins, oil, tallow, soap, candles, and tobacco, have all been exported in considerable quantities previous to the gold-digging era; and no doubt, as labour becomes cheaper and more abundant, will again form valuable articles for export.

Besides the commodities that have formed the staple export in the past, we may fairly assume that, in a new country only so partially known as this is, many other products are yet to be discovered of as great value as some of those already known. Vegetables grow to a size that would astonish the old gentlemen at home, who have been in the habit of growing enormous turnips, cabbages, &c. The cauliflowers are grown of immense size, and for cooking have to be cut up into four to suit the usual pot. I have seen one nine feet in circumference! The lettuces are particularly fine and very large; but the same may be said of all vegetables—they grow to a larger size, and are richer and freer of grubs and blights than at home.

Of poultry we have no statistical account; but, judging from my own observation, the increase must have been enormous, and must soon bring down the price to something more moderate than 8d. each for eggs, or 40s. for turkeys.

The vine has been cultivated to some extent in Victoria, and thrives well. The grapes are delicious; and the wine produced from them, although wanting body, may fairly be expected to improve. The grapes, when hung up and partially dried, keep for many months.

Irrigation is generally believed to be well adapted to the country, which, to a large extent, is very level. I believe the Government have not sufficiently kept this in view in making their surveys and in selling the land. This is a question which calls for immediate consideration, as it cannot be well carried out by individuals, but must be done as a system throughout whole districts of country, and the proper reserves for reservoirs made along the numerous creeks, at present quite empty in summer, but which, by a little outlay, might be made to keep up a plentiful supply of water during the summer months. This is a neglect on the part of the Government which will yet be a fruitful source of litigation, will cost the country millions to rectify, and can never be done so efficiently as on first laying out the land.

Timber abounds in all parts of the colony, but little use has been made of it except for firewood and fencing. The price for cutting it is more than the expense of bringing it from America. This will form a source of profit as labour becomes more

abundant. Little is known of the qualities of the woods of Australia. I am informed that a wood abounds on the Dandinong Ranges, about twenty miles from Melbourne, of a strength surpassing anything known for gig shafts, dray poles, &c. The trees in that district are also of enormous dimensions; and I have been informed by men who have lived there, that there are trees thirty feet in diameter. But without asserting this to be a fact, there is no doubt that the timber is both abundant and large. For ship-building, particularly for knees of large size, any quantity can be had; and all that is wanting to make this a great source of wealth to the colony is the completion of proper docks where ships can load, and railways or tramways by which timber can be conveyed cheaply.

The extent of country is about 500 miles east and west, with a coast line of about 600 miles, and the river frontage to the Murray of upwards of 1000 miles; containing 80,000 square miles, or about 50,000,000 acres of land, the greater part of which is fit for cultivation.

Agriculture, particularly the growth of bulky articles of food, holds out for the present the greatest inducements. Dairy produce can easily and profitably be raised in Victoria. Ireland, Scotland, and America at present supply most of the butter and cheese now used. Dairy establishments a little way from the towns would be highly remunerative: 3s. 6d. per pound for butter, and 1s. per quart, English measure, for milk, are now the rates charged, with little prospect of much reduction for many years to come.

Fish abound in great variety, and oysters are also found along the coast, although the markets are now very badly supplied with these articles. Fishermen from Cornwall and the English coasts would do well here; for few of those at present following that trade have been brought up to it.

The central and naturally favourable position of Victoria for commerce, although last mentioned, is by no means the least important as a source of wealth. When the proposed docks are completed, it will scarcely be second to any shipping port.

CHAPTER V.

THE GOVERNMENT OF VICTORIA.

THE good government of the colony is a subject of the most vital importance to the well-being of its inhabitants; and it is therefore with no slight feeling of interest that the promised Constitution is looked for by the peaceable and well-meaning population of Victoria. Macaulay, in one of his Essays, says that a broken head in Coldbath-fields excites more interest and attention in the House of Commons than the news of three pitched battles in India; and that fewer members attend to discuss the provisions of a new charter for a colony than are present when the clauses of a turnpike bill are brought before the House. If this be really the case, we can scarcely wonder that the New Constitution for the Colony of Victoria is yet among the promised acts of the British Government; and that twelve months must elapse before the Colonial Secretary finds it convenient to lay before the House of Commons the provisions of the Bill, which is to secure peace and good order to the colony. But the Bill, prepared for the better government of Victoria by the Colonial Legislature, cannot long be delayed; and it is to be hoped that when it does become law, its enactments will provide for the self-management of the colony and such a fair and equitable system of representation as will be equally acceptable to the old colonists and the gold-diggers, and for ever prevent a recurrence of those unfortunate outbreaks which, if not checked, will prove highly detrimental to the future prosperity of the whole community.

The government of the colony at present consists of an Executive Legislative Council,—the Lieutenant-Governor (President),

the Colonial Secretary, an Attorney-General, a Colonial Treasurer, a Collector of Customs, and the necessary staff of clerks. Of the Legislative Council, eight members are nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor, and thirty-five are elected by the voters. Voters must be natural born or naturalized subjects of the Queen, and must have attained the age of twenty-one. To exercise the privilege of a vote for member of the Legislative Council it is necessary that the voter should possess one or other of the following qualifications:—He must be a freeholder to the amount of £100; a leaseholder or householder renting land or tenement of the yearly value of £10; or a holder of a license to depasture. He must have paid the rates and taxes due up to within a certain period of the day of election; and must, moreover, be a free colonist and not a convict, and have occupied the house or land for which he claims to vote for at least six months previous to the day of election.

Sir Charles Hotham, K.C.B., the Lieutenant-Governor, enjoys an income of £10,000 per annum, with an additional £5000 for the payment of his staff, repairs of his official residence, travelling and other expenses, and a house rent free. The Act of the Colonial Legislature which secures to the Governor this amount of income came in operation on the 22nd of June, 1854. He received his appointment on the 3rd of December, 1853, and is deservedly popular.

These; with the regular police and other municipal officers, constitute what may be called the Government of Victoria; and under it that portion of the island has risen, in spite of many discouraging circumstances, and in the face of the fact that its people have been gathered together from all parts of the known world, and have not yet so far forgotten their old associations as to look upon the colony as their destined home and country, to a height of commercial success and political importance unexampled in the history of the world.

The following is an abstract of the annual revenue of the colony during the last four years—the gold era. It would be useless to go further back, because with 1851 may be said to have commenced the real history of the colony.

THE GOVERNMENT OF VICTORIA.

Years.	General Revenue.			Land Revenue.			Total.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1851	198,167	4	5	300,874	1	6	499,041	5	11
1852	914,594	5	6	720,900	12	2	1,635,494	17	8
1853	1,469,885	16	7	1,255,341	1	4	2,725,226	17	11
1854	1,803,733	5	4	1,668,774	1	7	3,472,507	6	11

In the above table the accounts for the years 1851 and 1852 are made up to the 31st of December; but those for the years 1853 and 1854 are made up to the end of September. The revenue of the colony is derived from the duties levied on spirits, tobacco, and various other commodities imported into the colony; but of late a great falling off has been experienced in the duties on many articles—£107,448 being the deficit, as compared with the previous year, on tobacco and spirits, up to December last. Although the state of the revenue at the end of 1854 shows a falling off as compared with the previous half year, yet, taking the whole year as a test of the general prosperity of the colony, the figures cannot but confirm my previous conclusion, that, notwithstanding the depression and failures lately experienced, Victoria is making great strides in the march of commercial enterprise and success. The following figures from another source will confirm the above opinion:—

Total revenue up to Dec. 31, 1853	.	£3,202,248
1854	.	3,223,172
Increase of revenue in 1854	.	£20,924

This increase, though not so large as might have been predicted from the experience of the two preceding years, is still sufficient to exhibit the certain, wholesome, and rapid growth of the colony.

The taxes of Great Britain and Ireland, previous to the war, amounted to £2 1s. 8d. for each individual; in the United States, to 8s. 6d. per head; in Victoria, the revenue raised amounts to £10 13s. 6d. per head. But as nearly half of this is raised from land, and considering the general ease with which money is obtained in the colony, it cannot be said that the taxes are felt to press so heavily on the community at large as might at first sight appear.

The expenditure in Victoria has been most reckless, and,

perhaps, in no respect more so than in the police and other similar establishments. It has been assumed by the Government, as well as by the colonists generally, that Victoria has an immense criminal population, and that provision must be made for the protection of the well-disposed on a similarly immense scale. Now, I have shown elsewhere that, notwithstanding all the exertions of the Government and all the enormous outlay to catch every criminal, the jail returns show that we have a population the most harmless in the world. We have, in fact, less crime than in any other country under heaven; but we have assumed that the contrary is the case, and we have spent, according to the calculation of the *Argus* newspaper of the 10th of March last, in

Catching a criminal	£370
Trying him	22
Keeping him	126
	<hr/>
Cost of each criminal	£518

This does not include the building of jails, nor the expense of jailers, nor the providing of the bolts, bars, locks, strong boxes, watchmen, high walls, &c., which we have conceived to be necessary for the safety of the well-disposed. If we set down these expenses, therefore, as about equal to that above stated, we have, as the cost of catching and securing a criminal a sum something like £1000; surely an extravagant sum, notwithstanding all the riches of the colony.

The question of a Federal Colonial Government must shortly force itself into notice. There are questions of interest to all the colonies which cannot be legislated for by any one of them, but jointly by all. Such a question is that of the import duties, attending the navigation of the Murray. Goods can be conveyed on this river to Victoria or New South Wales, without paying duty to these Governments. Another such question is that of the general defence. The mother country cannot be expected, in case of war with maritime powers like America or France, to weaken the defences of its own coast, by sending ships to protect her colonies, which are able enough to defend themselves. Light-houses on the coast also demand immediate attention.

The postal arrangements demand attention; and, perhaps, one

of the most important questions will shortly be that of railways, which cannot be dealt with by any one of the colonies, but must be considered as a comprehensive scheme for the whole of them.

It is greatly to be desired that the New Constitution may not be further delayed. The gold-diggers, as recent events have shown, may be goaded to discontent, and even to insurrection—the latter being the only way they have at present of calling attention to their grievances, real or fancied. The New Constitution provides them with representatives who can give utterance to their complaints, and obtain redress in a legitimate manner.

The policy of the Government in refusing to grant leases for the working of the gold mines by companies must certainly be approved of; yet it cannot be denied that some exceptions might have been made without in any way interfering with the diggers, and to the great benefit of the public as well as the shareholders of the companies. It is to be regretted, therefore, that several companies have been broken up.

The public of Victoria are as supremely indifferent about politics as any old Tory could wish; and if the Government would only act with discretion and some degree of energy, the Victorian public would be too happy to pay the necessary taxes, and give no further thought about elections, governmental or other public matters. Every man is too busy with his own personal affairs; and, besides, the public do not in general feel Australia to be their home. They have come too recently from home, as I have before observed, to have acquired much feeling of interest in the new country, excepting as a place to make money in.

Great care will, however, have to be taken to protect the interests of the digger. An exception must be made in favour of companies or individuals crushing the quartz rock by machinery, as capital cannot be invested without some certain security for permanent occupation, and room provided for them to extend their operations. At present the squatters may be said to have more than their fair share of representation, while the diggers have none at all.

With regard to internal improvements, many suggestions might be made. Lighthouses must be built to protect our shipping; tramways must be made for the better conveyance of

our riches to the sea-coast; and companies must be formed for the realization of the true wealth of Victoria. It is not only gold and wool—though these are the staple of the colony—that must be produced; but encouragement ought now to be held out by the colonial government to companies for working the coal and other minerals so indispensable to the rapid growth of the colony.

On Tuesday, June 12, a notice was given in the House of Commons, by the member for Marylebone, that, on the second reading of the Victoria Constitution Bill, he should move that it be read that day six months; and a deputation of merchants and others, who waited on the Secretary of State for the Colonies, elicited from his lordship that he considered it indispensable for the colonists to support religious establishments from their own funds.

The Colonial Secretary has at last brought forward the New Constitution, the heads of which I now propose to give.

The Bill, as sent by the Colonial Legislature, has been somewhat modified by the Colonial Secretary, and the following may be taken as its leading features.

Two Houses to be established. First, the Legislative Council, to consist of 30 members. The Colony to be divided into six electoral provinces; and each province to return an equal number of members—viz., five each. Such member must be thirty years of age, a natural born subject of the Queen, and must hold property of the value of £5000 for at least one year previous to election, or of the annual value of £500. No minister of religion nor any judge can be elected, nor any felon.

Every elector must be twenty-one years of age; a natural born or naturalized subject, and have been resident one year in the Colony previous to registration; he must be worth £1000 in property, within the province for which he is to vote, or of £100 annual value, or be a leaseholder to the amount of £100 value for a lease of five years and clear of all charges. Or he must be a graduate of an University in the British dominions, or a barrister or solicitor on the roll of the Supreme Court of Victoria, or a legally-qualified medical practitioner, or an officiating minister; or an officer of the land or sea forces, except on actual service, and not

a felon, and having paid his taxes to within three months of the day of registration. Two years after the passing of the act, no person is to be allowed to vote who cannot read and write. A President shall be elected by the Council, subject to the approval of the Governor: ten members to form a quorum.

The Second House or Legislative Assembly to consist of sixty members. The Colony to be divided into thirty-seven Electoral Districts. Melbourne to have five, South Grant three, Geelong four; fourteen districts to have two each; and twenty to have one member each. They must be twenty-one years of age, natural born subjects of the Queen, or naturalized by the law for five years, and resident in Victoria for two years; possessed of property to the value of £2000, or of property of the annual value of £200 free of all charges, &c. No judge, or minister, or felon, shall be capable of being elected.

Electors must be twenty-one years of age, natural born subjects or naturalized, and resident in the Colony one year previous to registration, and must hold a freehold within the district they vote for of the value of £50, or of the clear annual value of £5 free of all charges, &c.; or be leaseholders to the value of £10 annual rent, free of all charges; or householders within the district to the value of £10, or occupying waste land, and paying rent for twelve months; or be in possession of an annual salary of £100, all being duly registered and in occupation six months previous to registration. No one can vote who is a felon, or who owes taxes three months previous to registration, or who, two years after the passing of this act, shall be unable to read and write.

If a member of either House accept of an office of profit under the Crown, his seat shall become vacant; but he may be re-elected. Four of the officers of Government, at least, must be members of the Council or Assembly.

Every Assembly to continue for five years, unless dissolved by the Governor.

A Speaker to be elected to preside at the meetings.

Twenty members to form a quorum; the Speaker to have a casting vote.

If any member becomes bankrupt, a felon, a public defaulter, or *non compos mentis*, his seat shall become vacant.

The first writs for the election of members for either House must be issued within twelve months after the proclamation of this act.

CIVIL LIST.—One hundred and twelve thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds for services and purposes to be paid to Her Majesty, instead of all territorial, casual, and other revenues of the Crown; and to be applied as follows:—

Governor's salary	£10,000	
Salaries of staff, repairs of Government House, &c.	5,000	
	<hr/>	£15,000
Chief Justice	3,000	
Three Judges, £2,500 each	7,500	
Master in Equity	1,500	
	<hr/>	12,000
Colonial Secretary	2,500	
Attorney-General, Treasurer, Commissioner of Public Works, Collector of Customs, Surveyor-General, £2,000 each, or	10,000	
Solicitor-General	1,500	
	<hr/>	14,000
Clerk and expenses of the Executive Council	1,500	
Clerk and expenses of the Legislative Council	5,000	
Auditor-General	2,000	
	<hr/>	8,500
Pensions to officers	4,000	
Compensation to any of the following who may retire or be released on political grounds:—Colonial Secretary, the Attorney-General, the Colonial Treasurer, the Collector of Customs, the Solicitor-General, the Surveyor-General	5,250	
Pensions to persons who may retire or be released from office on political grounds	4,000	
Public worship*	50,000	
	<hr/>	63,250
		<hr/>
		£112,750

Full powers are given to deal with the waste lands, to sell, let, or dispose.

The appropriation of the revenue, and all duties, taxes, &c., shall be made by the Assembly; and may be rejected, but not altered, by the Council.

* This sum is to be apportioned to each denomination, according to the relative proportion of their members by the last census; and power is to be given to the colonists to alter it, or discontinue it if they see fit.

It shall not be lawful for the Assembly to originate or pass any resolution or bill for the appropriation of any part of the said consolidated fund, or any other duty, tax, &c., for any purpose which shall not have been first recommended by a message from the Governor to the Assembly, during the session in which such vote or bill shall be passed.

No alteration can be made in the Constitution, unless by an absolute majority of the whole number of the Members of both Houses respectively; and the said alteration must be reserved for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure thereon.

Any alterations may be made in the qualification of electors and members of both Houses, in the electoral provinces or districts, in the number of members, &c., by act or acts.

By the above act, the colonists have put into their hands the future government and development of the country, and an end is put to all cause of discontent with the mother country; year by year the alliance will only be more closely cemented. The mother country, commercially, will be the great gainer by the prosperity of the colony, which it must now be the business of the colonists themselves to promote.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BANKING SYSTEM OF VICTORIA.

As this pamphlet is intended for the perusal of the commercial community of Victoria and England, rather than for that anomalous class of persons known as "general readers," no apology need be offered for introducing the figures which appear in this chapter. It is certain that only by a sound system of banking can any colony thrive; and therefore it is with pleasure that I am enabled to pronounce the commercial system of Victoria one which will bear the buffetings of fortune unscathed; for, in spite of several partial panics, the banks of the colony have proved themselves to be based upon safe commercial policy, and liberal management.

There are in Victoria seven banks, which all carry on business at Melbourne. They are all joint-stock banks of issue, and, with the exception of the Bank of Victoria, have branches also in England or in the other colonies.

The united capital, and the amount employed in the colony by the six largest banks, is	£2,232,972
Besides which, they have notes in circulation to the amount of	2,591,072
	<hr/>
Giving a total of	£4,824,044
The other bank is only a branch bank, and the capital employed in the colony is understood not to exceed	100,000
Notes in circulation	43,000
	<hr/>
Thus showing a total amount of circulating medium	£4,967,044

This, although a large capital for the population, shows a deficiency of capital as compared with the commerce of the colony.

It is difficult to draw a correct parallel between the home country and Victoria, every circumstance of the two being dissimilar; at the same time, some approximation to the capital required may be come to by a comparison with the capital required for the commerce of the United Kingdom. The paid-up capital at present used in banking in the United Kingdom, and the notes they can legally issue, may be fairly estimated at . . . £96,317,151

The exports of the United Kingdom for 1852,
amounted to about 78,076,845

The exports of Victoria amount to 11,061,543

Therefore the same proportions as the United
Kingdom would require a circulating medium
to the amount of 13,645,724

Instead of which we have only a capital in gold of . . . 2,232,972

And in notes of 2,591,076

Making a total of 4,824,048

And showing a deficiency of £8,821,676

Not only is there a large deficiency in the circulating medium of the colony, but many of the banks, not content with their regular banking business, have entered largely into mercantile transactions in buying gold at the various diggings, which course has not only absorbed a part of their capital, but has done much damage to the store-keepers at the diggings, by competing with them in the purchase of gold, besides removing the necessity which formerly existed, of their making prompt remittances of the gold to the wholesale stores in Melbourne, who supplied them. Certain it is, that since the bankers established branches at the diggings, the store-keepers there have lodged their money with the banks instead of sending it at once to Melbourne in payment of their debts. The effect of the system pursued by the banks has been very mischievous, as the banking firms at Melbourne immediately thereafter withdrew their usual accommodation to their customers; and this is one of the grand causes of the difficulties now existing amongst so many—indeed, with nearly all who have been doing business with the diggings. As well might the banks purchase the wool from the settlers as the gold from the

diggers : it is contrary to the universally acknowledged principles of banking, and will yet yield its due fruits, not only to the principal actors in the scheme, but to the whole community.

The public of Victoria must not forget their isolated position. At home, a run may take place in Liverpool—but then Liverpool has London to fall back upon. In the colony each bank must rely, to a great measure, upon itself. Besides, it is not keeping good faith with their customers, who are obliged, sometimes to their great loss, to keep up the usual balances with their bankers; even though they cannot always get the usual accommodation, owing to the banks having themselves employed the capital in mercantile pursuits which should have been used in discounting the regular trade bills of their customers. One firm that I am acquainted with, who showed a balance of £30,000 in their favour, was obliged to make an assignment of their estate, although they had on hand bills to the amount of £25,000. If a small portion of these bills had been discounted, an enormous amount of loss would have been saved, and the firm enabled to meet their engagements. The banks of Victoria will do well to remember that even the Bank of England, within the last fifty years, was saved from stopping payment by the timely resolution of the merchants of London to take Bank of England notes in payment.

The shareholders of these banks are not known, as they are not obliged to publish the list of shareholders, as is done at home. They charge from six to eight per cent. discount on short bills, and allow no interest on deposit accounts.

Their profits are sometimes very large. One bank declared as much as 40 per cent. dividend on the paid-up capital last year, and another 17 per cent., besides large reserve funds. Surely such a general state of things would indicate room for another bank with a large capital. The following is from the *Argus* of October 27, 1854:—"The banks for a long time continued liberal in their discounts; and, having locked up their funds, they are now scarcely able to meet the demands of legitimate trade. They are thus restrictive to many good houses at the very time that they ought to be liberal. This unfortunate system increases the rigour of the trial; and, were it not for the general leniency of creditors, might produce disastrous results." And the same article goes on to say—

"It was generally considered that the 4th inst., when very heavy liabilities became due, was a test of the soundness of our mercantile body: and the engagements having been all but universally met, there is now greater confidence, and there is no fear of any commercial crisis. The outsiders will be gradually weeded out, and trade in the end will be placed on a more legitimate basis."

All the banks publish quarterly statements of their affairs, of which the following from one bank with the largest money transactions is a fair specimen:—

GENERAL ABSTRACT, SHOWING THE AVERAGE AMOUNT OF THE LIABILITIES AND ASSETS OF THE BANK OF AUSTRALASIA, WITHIN THE COLONY OF VICTORIA.

Taken from the several Weekly Statements during the Quarter from the 30th June to the 30th September, 1854.

LIABILITIES.	AMOUNT.
Notes in circulation	£998,077 16 11
Bills in circulation	26,727 12 7
Balances due to other banks	124 1 6
Deposits	2,048,349 11 11
Total amount of Liabilities	£3,072,279 2 11

ASSETS.	AMOUNT.
Coined gold and silver, and other coined metals:—	
Gold and silver in bullion or bars	£752,453 9 10
Government securities	84,808 16 9
Landed property	288,461 10 9
Notes and bills of other banks	51,625 3 3
Balances due from other banks	162,252 0 0
Amount of all debts due to this bank, including notes, bills of exchange, and all stock and funded debts of every description, excepting notes, bills, and balances, due to the said bank from other banks	2,337,144 9 3
Total amount of Assets	3,656,545 9 10
	3,072,279 2 11

Excess of Assets over Liabilities	£584,266 6 11
Amount of Capital Stock paid up at this date	£900,000 0 0
Rate of the last Dividend declared to the Shareholders, 6 per cent., and Bonus of 3s. per share, being equal to	17½ per cent.
Amount of last Dividend declared	78,750 0 0
Amount of the reserved profits after declaring such Dividend	£309,892 19 8

The confidence of the public in these establishments is very great, and is no doubt well-founded. The intention of these periodical

statements is to maintain that confidence, by showing the affairs of the banks to all the customers; and so long as the confidence continues, it signifies little what statement is published, as these balance sheets would only be valuable in times of panic. We have known runs made upon banks, through panic, without any good reason, as results have proved that they were not only solvent, but enormously rich, as for instance that of Sir W. Forbes, and on the Bank of England itself. Now if a panic ever does come in Melbourne—and with the rapid changes daily taking place there, it is no very daring supposition—then these statements will totally fail in their object. In fact, they will rather tend to shake confidence than to confirm it. Take, for instance, the £6,791,336 5s. the amount of all debts due to these banks, including notes, bills of exchange, and all stock and funded debts of every description, excepting notes, bills and balances, due to the said banks from other banks. This is fully three times the amount of their capital, and we have no information whatever how much of the above is convertible, and how much is inconvertible in such a case. There is, indeed, little doubt, from the known judgment and discretion of the managements, that there is everything to gain and nothing to lose by a much more detailed statement; and, combined with that a list of shareholders, scarcely any possible circumstance could shake public confidence.

The following is the amount of gold and silver and coined money held by the seven banks:—

	GOLD AND SILVER.	AMOUNT OF DEPOSITS NOT BEARING ANY INTEREST.
Bank of Victoria, 30th Sep.	£704,715 0 1	£1,160,377 4 8
Union Bank of Australia	773,342 18 0	1,648,384 17 1
Bank of Australasia	887,062 6 7	2,048,349 11 11
English, Scottish and Australian	93,454 15 9	50,206 2 10
London Chartered Bank of Australia	173,055 0 0	224,151 4 6
Bank of New South Wales, 30th June	457,804 17 4	1,039,649 2 8
This bank includes the Sydney bank in its returns. I have taken half for Melbourne.		
The Oriental Bank is a branch bank, and is the only newly-established bank which does not publish returns. I therefore estimated its capital at		
	100,000 2 3	50,000 16 4
Which gives a Total of	£3,139,485 0 0	£6,211,119 0 0

The bank notes in circulation amount to £2,591,072, and are issued free of stamp duty.

The following are the bank liabilities and assets of Victoria:—

General Abstract of Sworn Returns, rendered pursuant to the Act of Council, 4th Victoria, No. 13, of the Average Liabilities and Assets and of the Capital and Profits of the undermentioned Banks of the Colony of Victoria, taken from the several Weekly Statements during the Quarter from the 1st of July to the 30th of September, 1854:—

LIABILITIES.

Banks.	Notes in Circulation.		Bills in Circulation.		Balances due to other Banks.*		Deposits.		Reserved Fund, Profit and Loss Account, &c.		Total Amount of Liabilities.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Australasia	998,077	16 11	25,727	12 7	124	1 6	2,046,549	11 11	—	—	3,072,279	2 11
Union Bank of Australia	249,332	1 8	20,859	17 0	954	16 0	1,646,584	17 1 9	—	—	1,919,551	11 9
New South Wales Bank	401,048	1 0	2,063	15 0	850,520	5 4	760,748	12 6	—	—	2,014,380	13 10
London Chartered Bank of Australiat	224,913	10 9	2,109	10 3	—	—	224,151	4 6	—	—	451,174	5 9
Victoria	470,237	0 0	9,452	18 6	80,382	14 3	1,150,377	4 8	96,501	8 4	1,756,951	5 9
English, Scotch, and Australian Chartered Bank†	45,132	3 1	—	—	54	3 0	50,206	2 10	—	—	93,392	8 11
Totals	2,386,760	13 5	60,213	13 4	882,036	0 1	5,582,217	13 6	96,501	8 4	9,307,729	8 8

ASSETS.

Banks.	Gold, Silver, and other Coined Metals.		Gold and Silver in Bullion or Bars.		Landed Property.		Notes and Bills of other Banks.		Balances due from other Banks.		Government Securities.		All Debts due to the Bank.‡		Total Amount of Assets.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Australasia	752,453	9 10	84,608	16 9	51,625	3 3	162,252	0 0	—	—	263,461	10 9	2,387,144	9 3	3,655,545	9 10
Union Bank of Australia	731,396	0 8	41,946	17 4	24,012	4 6	30,721	2 6	3,287	11 2	1,750,071	12 6	1,750,071	12 6	2,681,463	8 8
New South Wales Bank	317,328	16 6	254,444	12 5	30,997	3 8	12,921	12 4	550,887	11 5	108,638	9 3	768,874	8 10	2,681,092	14 5
London Chartered Bank of Australia	173,055	0 0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	662,612	15 7	662,612	15 7
Victoria	606,098	5 9	98,616	14 4	10,059	5 6	72,973	5 3	67,196	17 3	—	—	1,146,689	17 8	2,601,664	5 5
English, Scotch, and Australian Chartered Bank	90,489	16 11	2,965	13 10	5,600	6 2	2,089	6 2	2,307	13 10	—	—	100,983	1 2	204,335	18 1
Totals	2,670,821	9 8	482,582	14 8	122,394	3 1	280,907	6 3	623,679	13 8	377,100	0 0	6,721,336	5 0	11,348,751	12 4

* Balances due to other banks or to other branches of this bank.

† The return from the London Chartered Bank of Australia is for the period commencing on the 26th June, and ending on the 25th September, 1854.

‡ The return of the English, Scottish, and Australian Chartered Bank is for the period commencing on the 26th June, and ending on the 25th Sept. 1854.

§ Including notes, bills of exchange, and all stock and funded debts of every description, excepting notes, bills, and balances due to the bank from other banks.

|| Balances due from other banks and other branches of this bank.

BANKING SYSTEM OF VICTORIA.

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CAPITAL AND PROFITS.

Banks.	Amount of Capital Stock paid up at this date.	Rate of last Dividend declared to Shareholders.	Amount of last Dividend declared.	Amount of Reserved Profits after declaring such Dividend.	Average amount of the Capital Stock paid up during the quarter ending 20 Sept. 1864.
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Australasia	900,000 0 0	6 per cent. and bonus of 3s. per share, being equal to 17½ per cent. per annum	78,750 0 0	309,692 19 6	—
Union Bank of Australia	820,000 0 0	40 per cent. per an.	164,000 0 0	215,767 0 8	—
New South Wales Bank	478,472 10 0	20 per cent. per an.	40,000 0 0	76,497 17 0	—
London Chartered Bank of Australia	300,000 0 0	4 per cent. per an.	7,500 0 0	4,778 5 3	—
Victoria	247,535 0 0	10 per cent. per an.	11,961 5 0	69,001 7 2	244,693 0 0
English, Scotch, and Australian Chartered Bank	350,000 0 0	—	—	—	—
Totals	3,291,007 10 0		302,231 5 0	675,937 9 9	244,693 0 0

The amount of deposits, £6,211,119, is small when compared with the enormous amount of the commerce of Victoria, and is accounted for by the fact that no interest is allowed; but it is enormous compared to the population. A savings bank in the colony is greatly needed, and would tend greatly to promote habits of economy and saving amongst the working classes.

It is worthy of remark, that the reserved funds of these banks far exceed the reserves of the London joint-stock banks, the six largest of which have £486,208. The six Victoria banks have £675,937 9s. 9d.

By the advices last received from the colony, the drain upon the resources of the banks had altogether ceased. Deposits had increased; notes, bills, &c., due to the banks had decreased. This is the sure indication of returning prosperity, and of renewed confidence; and, although the winter months, from May to October, may again cause a depression, it may now be fairly assumed that any danger from the crisis has passed over, and that the coming summer, from October till April, will be one of steady improvement and prosperity; and it is to be hoped that bankers, merchants, and the public, both in the colony and at home, will

* Amount of the capital stock paid up at the date of the last advices from London, employed in London, New South Wales, Van Dieman's Land, New Zealand, and Victoria.

have learned some useful lessons from the ordeal which the colony has passed through.

MELBOURNE STOCK AND SHARE LIST,

Saturday, 30th Dec. 1854.

	Shares.	Paid up.	Last Dividend.	Latest Sales.
BANKS.				
Australasia	40	£ 40 0	17½ per cent.	£85½
Union	25	25 0	40 ditto.	£86
New South Wales	20	2 10	10 ditto.	8½
Victoria	50	20 0	10 ditto.	32 to 34
London Chartered	20	15 0	—	£3 pm.
Oriental	25	18 0	—	2 pm.
English, Scottish, and Australian	25	25 0	—	48 to 48.
	20	12 0	—	2½ dia.
PUBLIC COMPANIES.				
Melbourne Gas	5	5 0	—	5 dia.
Ditto, New	5	1 10	—	20 pm.
Colonial Insurance	5	0 5	—	—
Victoria Insurance	25	2 10	10 per cent.	£10
Geelong Insurance	50	6 0	15 ditto.	par.
PUBLIC LOANS.				
City of Melbourne (6 per cent.)	—	—	—	£105
Town of Geelong (ditto)	—	—	—	£105
RAILWAYS.				
Melbourne and Hobson's Bay	50	50 0	—	15 disc.
Melbourne and Mount Alexander	25	10 0	—	30s. dia.
Geelong and Melbourne	20	10 0	—	par.

This, then, is a brief abstract of the bank returns of the colony of Victoria. From it the merchant will be easily enabled to draw a tolerably correct conclusion of our monetary safety.

The establishment of a really National Bank in Australia, combining discount and issue, would be of great service to the colony; and I think the above statement tends to show that there is a deficiency of bank accommodation, and that there is room for a share of some of the above profits.

CHAPTER VII.

LAND, ROADS, AND TRAMWAYS IN VICTORIA.

ABOUT nineteen years ago Mr. Bateman made the first purchase of land in Port Philip. He agreed with the ignorant aborigines to pay an annual tribute of blankets, knives, flour, &c., amounting in value to about £41, for the sole and entire possession of 500,000 acres of land—something like a shilling for a square mile. This purchase was, however, set aside by the Government, because, amongst other reasons, of its manifest injustice to the native. The miserable natives would, nevertheless, have been much better off now had the original bargain been fulfilled; for the squatters have ever since held the land on terms nearly as cheap, and now claim compensation if any part of their sheep-runs is sold by Government for the urgent agricultural wants of the colonists; and this too at a time when the latter have to pay from sixpence to a shilling each for their cabbages, from £40 to £80 a ton for hay to feed their cattle, and from £30 to £100 a ton for flour! Some of that same land which was sold by the natives at a shilling the square mile, and which the squatters have held at a nominal rental, has since been sold at the incredible rate of £150,000,000 per square mile. Five square miles of country sold at this rate would almost pay the national debt; yet at such a rate as this was a small piece of land at the corner of Elizabeth Street sold; and at nearly the same extravagant rate have many building sites in Melbourne been purchased. In London we think £3000 an acre a high price for building sites. In Melbourne five times that rate is commonly asked and received.

This vexed land question will, it is to be hoped, soon be satisfactorily settled. Any settlement which would be the means

of bringing the vast tracts of fertile country, now held merely as sheep-runs or lying waste, into cultivation, must be a gain to the colony. Both the contending parties—the people and the squatters—are wealthy enough to concede a point or two in such an important question, considering how much the colony must gain or lose by its longer delay. We have abundance of the richest land in the world, fitted for growing all kinds of European grains and fruits; we have farmers waiting to cultivate the land, and hundreds more willing to come if they could be assured that farms could be obtained at reasonable rates. We have now, also, an abundant supply of labour, but still the land does not get settled; and while the question remains in its present unsatisfactory state, nothing seems likely to be done to bring about that desirable consummation. At the very best, we are likely for many years to continue large importers of the necessaries of life. Our imports in 1853 for farm produce were—

	Bushels.	Tons.
Wheat	60,564	
Maize	98,402	
Barley		1,532
Oats	837,703	
Peas		231
Flour and Bread		37,147
Rice		243
Potatoes		8,907
Malt	32,915	
Other Grain	25,104	
Total value		£1,589,857

Hay, about 12,000 tons, at the average price of £20 per ton, amounts to £240,000, making nearly £2,000,000 for 1853, and for 1854 the amount was upwards of two millions. We are thus sending out of the colony, annually, a sum of from one and a-half to two millions sterling, which, under good management, might be retained, and added to the wealth of the inhabitants.

Instances are not wanting of farmers coming to Victoria with sufficient means to bring thousands of acres of waste lands into cultivation, who, after many months' search, were unable either to rent or purchase on reasonable terms, and who have either had to leave the colony, or turn their attention to some other calling.

Meanwhile, the land remains a waste, and the colony ships off to America or Europe, and the neighbouring colonies, its millions of gold, and the farmer leaves the colony, broken in spirit and poorer than he came. Surely some means might have been found before this of allowing the land to be farmed on lease, and saving this enormous loss to the colony. The present mode of selling only partially meets the difficulty, as a large portion in the most desirable parts of the country is purchased by land speculators, whose business is not to cultivate, but to re-sell, or lease, at enormous profit to themselves, and consequent loss to the actual tillers of the soil. There appears to be no sufficient comprehension on the part of the Government of the real wants of the colonists. Certainly, if the sale of land goes on, the soil must ultimately find its way into the hands of the real cultivators; but meantime, the people of Victoria are allowed to remain an acreless and discontented people. A shorter and more beneficial mode of disposing of it would be to enable the agriculturist to select land for himself, and giving him the same on a lease, with or without power to purchase. We cannot, without some such tempting offer, induce the hundreds of thousands of emigrants from Great Britain, Germany, and Ireland, now finding their way to the States of America, to direct their steps to Australia. Gold is *now* the attraction; but land must eventually be the loadstone that will draw emigrants to our shores. The principle acted on towards the squatters, was to give every facility and encouragement to them—the main object being to develop the resources of the country, and foster the prosperity of the people. The results of this liberal and enlightened policy to the squatters is known to all men. Countless herds of sheep and cattle, an immense commerce in wool, tallow, &c., a rich and thriving community, and a contented and loyal people, were the natural fruits. Freely, and without hindrance, permission was granted to take possession and develop the first resources of the country.

We find, however, that a great increase has taken place the last six months in the quantity of land offered by Government at public auction. No fewer than 2034 country and suburban lots of farming land from the size of a small garden to that of a large farm, and 1415 town lots, have been offered for sale.

Up to March, 1855, 1,600,000 acres have been sold ; and it is supposed by the Sub-Committee of the Chamber of Commerce that one-tenth is cultivated. The *Argus* newspaper estimates the amount under cultivation at about half the above. On this subject it says :—

“ On inquiry we find, to our great regret, that the Government have been unable to collect reliable statistics in reference to the quantity of land under cultivation, and the numbers of stock. This duty was entrusted to the police, and the failure is attributable to the inexperience and negligence of newly-formed establishments.

“ In the absence of certain data, an approximate estimate has been formed of cultivation in the neighbourhood of the various gold-fields, from the reports to the Surveyor-General of District Surveyors ; and it was stated, some time ago, that at least 10,000 acres of fresh land had been fenced in and cultivated.

“ Previous to the golden era the following was the amount of cultivation :—In 1851 the total number of acres cultivated was 57,296, of which 29,623 were under wheat, and the produce of the latter was 733,321 bushels ; equal to 18,333 tons of flour, which would be sufficient for the support of nearly 100,000 persons. In 1852 the cultivation fell off nearly 50 per cent., but in 1853 agriculture began again to make progress, and, from reports now received, we are inclined to think that in 1854 the quantity cultivated will have attained its former amount in the original agricultural districts, with the addition of the 10,000 acres near the diggings. It is probable, however, that not more than the former quantity has been sown with wheat, in which case the bread-stuffs will not be sufficient for more than one-third of the population. In that event we shall have to import flour for 200,000 persons, which we estimate at 37,000 tons at the least.”

The policy so successfully pursued in growing beef and mutton, would also, if tried, be successful in producing abundance of wheat, vegetables, and fruits. Let it be proclaimed that the liberty granted to the sheep farmer is now extended to the agriculturist, and that for a simple licence fee for revenue purposes any one may have a portion of land to cultivate as a farm, and the thousands of

emigrants now directing their steps to the far west forests of North America will turn their faces towards the sunny shores and fruitful plains of Australia: shores which are now as accessible to the emigrant as the valley of the Mississippi or the broad prairies of Texas. Smiling gardens and waving fields of corn would take the place of the wattle and the gum-tree; and instead of importing the necessaries of life as we now do, we should retain our immense supplies of gold to pay our own farmers, or to import manufactures for their use.

Various circumstances, too, combine at this time to favour emigration to Australia. In the United States, the Know-Nothing Societies oppose, with all their might, the introduction of emigrants from Europe with the cry of "America for the Americans;" and in the large towns of the Union and Canada, the remuneration for labour is not greatly larger than in England. Victoria is the paradise of labour. In great Britain, too, the manufacturing interests are depressed, and many workmen are unemployed; while in Victoria, trade has revived, gold is plentiful, land abundant, and labour in demand. All that is wanted is a proper understanding as to the terms on which land may be occupied.

One of our great wants—a want that is felt by every man in the Colony—is that of good roads. At present they are in a disgraceful state, though a little money, well laid out, would bring them into a state of efficiency. Suppose a line of tramway to be run out from Melbourne into any of the fertile districts,—say, for instance, to the gold-fields of Ballarat. The cost would be £3000 per mile for a single line—that being the cost of the one constructed at the mouth of the Murray. Suppose the land on each side leased at one shilling per acre, extending back into the country six miles on each side; this would yield a return of £384 per mile of tramway, or nearly 13 per cent. on the outlay. The expense of transit of goods to Ballarat is now from five to ten shillings per ton per mile; say that the railway reduced this sum to two shillings per ton per mile, and that thirty tons a-day is the loading to Ballarat, this would produce £939 per mile. A passenger traffic—certainly not above the fair estimate—of the same amount (£939) may be calculated on. Besides this, there is the gold from the diggings, and new villages and towns would also spring up.

Then the increased traffic caused by the leasing of the lands, as well as the natural increase occasioned by the facility and cheapness of the carriage to and from the diggings, may be fairly put down at half the present traffic—or say, £469—making altogether £2,347 per mile. Add the £384 for the rent of the land, and we have £2,731, or nearly the whole cost of the railway, returned annually.

Firewood, to the extent of 100,000 loads at least, is used in Melbourne, which costs about 45s. per load—the cutting costs 7s. 6d. per load; you have, therefore, no less a sum than £187,500 for cartage. Similar calculations might be made of stone, brick, slate, &c., showing such a railway prospectus as would astonish railway speculators at home.

Add to all this, the saving to the community on the gold-fields, the opening up homes for the thousands now flocking to our shores, and the building up of an immense country, a grand centre of civilization and happiness, radiating the blessings of peace and commerce to the surrounding nations.

The importance of securing a settled population in the country is difficult to over-estimate. If we view it as a means of raising revenue for the Government, or if we view it as a means of giving the colonial merchant an outlet for his imports, or to the mother country customers, each one equal, as I have elsewhere shown, to 300 European customers; or to the squatter, customers for his beef and mutton; or to the emigrant himself, who is placed in a position easily to gain not only a living but a fortune;—all are gainers, and none are losers, by removing the legal impediments which Government has obtruded in the way of the natural development of the land.

I do not go into the dispute with the squatters—that must be settled with fairness to all parties; but the country cannot be sacrificed to a class, and must be thrown open to the emigrant for cultivation.

Who can tell the story of the secret impulses which have sent so many men so far from those friends they hold so dear—from all the associations and companions of their youth! How many have left behind them those they love better than life, the remembrance of whose bright eyes nerves their hearts to trials of endurance, privation, and suffering; and some who have aged

parents or helpless children dependent on them! Is it not cruel that these men, in addition to the hardships of a digger's life, should live under laws oppressive and insulting?—laws which prevent them from investing their hard-earned savings in the cultivation of the soil, but compel them to pay the foreigner for bringing them food, which they could grow more cheaply themselves, and at their own doors? How short-sighted and unintentionally cruel man is to his fellow-man!

The great end of the gold digging should be to tempt men, in the first instance, to come to the country; but with the ultimate view of securing them as a settled population of farmers, vine-growers, &c. But the very opposite has been the policy pursued. We have made the diggers as uncomfortable as possible, and then we refuse to supply them with the requisite land on which to grow food.

But it must not be supposed that we are in a stand-still state. Notwithstanding every difficulty, large tracts of land are getting under cultivation, as the following, from a paper published at the Ballarat diggings, will show:—

“ Although more than we could wish of the rich lands around Ballarat have fallen into the hands of mere speculators, still a large portion of them is owned by *bona fide* settlers, who are turning it to good advantage. Here and there over nearly all the land, some time purchased, are small patches of cultivation, and in several places good-sized farms are carefully attended to. From the fertility of the soil, and the golden prospects of the present cultivation, there is no doubt but that a much greater breadth will be under crop next year. It is gratifying to see that not only are the more substantial products raised, but that here and there shrubs and flowers come in for a share of attention. The latter circumstance proves that, after all, we are not such a money-grubbing community as some might consider us. From what we have seen already, we believe that before another year has passed over our heads, we shall have agricultural and horticultural associations formed, and by an honourable rivalry through them, we shall discover the capabilities of our virgin soil. While we acknowledge that there are impediments thrown in the way of agricultural pursuits, still we must allow that there is additional influence,

more than absolute gain, required to urge the farmers to make the best use of their fertile acres. A little wholesome friendly competition, rather for honour than profit, would do more to bring this about, than anything else. Look at the benefits which have followed such associations in other parts of the colony. Pity that they are not more general; they would tend in no inconsiderable degree to prove that Victoria is not only pre-eminent in rich gold deposits, but that her soil is a rich mine of rural happiness and independence. Give us the yellow ore and the rich golden grain for the products of our colony, and then we will be able to stand forth peerless among our competitors, backed till needed for other purposes by the miles that now furnish a better than the fabled golden fleece. We feel convinced that, though dearly purchased, we are approaching at telegraphic speed the happiest days that have yet dawned on Victoria."

The country is undergoing rapid and considerable changes. Springs of water have broken out in places where they were known not to exist a few years ago; streams are now running the year through which formerly only ran a few months in the year; and the creeks generally run for a longer time in each year than formerly. The land, also, which formerly was soft and marshy, has become more firm; this is said to be owing to the continual traffic and treading of the cattle over parts of it.

The railways now in progress are the Geelong and Melbourne, and the Mount Alexander and Murray River; the only portion of this line as yet contracted for being between Melbourne and Williamstown; and in operation we have only the short line to Sandridge, which, constructed with wages at their highest, and opposed by a good road, is, wonderful to relate and contrary to general expectation, a paying line—the weekly return being £500 per mile; while that of the London and North-Western is only £195 per mile per week.

It is to be greatly regretted that in a new colony, whose circumstances and requirements are altogether so different from those of an old and settled country like Great Britain, that the same system of railways should be introduced,—a system which never can be carried out with profit, and one which will cause long delay. America, with that practical adaptation of means to

an end, for which she is distinguished, has adopted so much of the railway system as was suited to her wants. We, even with America to copy, have not yet seen in what way railways are to benefit the colony. From their land system and their railway system we might learn some useful lessons.

During the visit of William Howitt to Australia, the roads were, he tells us, everywhere, and especially in and about the neighbourhood of the gold-diggings, in a most disgraceful state; not only unpaved and rotten, but undermined and full of holes—perfect bogs. This state of things has greatly improved since the date (1853) at which he wrote. Instead of muddy and dangerous highways, and of rivers unprovided with ferry-boats and bridges, we hope soon to have good hard roads, and every facility for traffic and commerce, provided by the Government of the colony. But we must not be too sanguine. Improvement, even in old and settled countries, has always to do battle with routine. How unreasonable, then, to expect perfection in a land only partially peopled, partially surveyed, and possessing but partial means of self-government!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MORAL ASPECT OF VICTORIA.

THE moral aspect of Melbourne is a subject which I fear to approach. So much has been said about the dangers of walking the streets after dark, and so many stories have been told of robberies committed in the open day, that to attempt to contradict such a popular belief is to run the risk of having one's veracity called in question. Yet truth requires that such stories should, in great part, be met with a positive contradiction. I assert, and shall prove, that Melbourne is not a more dangerous place than Glasgow or Liverpool; and crime of a certain sort does not vaunt itself so openly in the streets as it does in those towns.

There is an outward decorum and propriety about the streets of Melbourne; and every one seems too busy with his own affairs to mind those of his neighbours. It is well known in Melbourne that the greater part of those who are what is called "stuck-up" are drunken men, and the real cases of "sticking-up" are very few indeed. I have myself walked home through all the streets of Melbourne at all hours, and also into the country at all times of the night, and I never yet met with the slightest interruption, and never went armed.

In 1853, out of 702 inquests held in Melbourne, only three were proved to have been cases of murder, three of robbery with violence, and five of shooting with intent to murder. Surely, out of a population of three hundred thousand of young fiery spirits, this is not a very bad state of things.

It must always be borne in mind, however, that Victoria never was a penal settlement; and, although it must be admitted that convicts have escaped from the adjoining colonies, yet the infusion of really good blood into Victoria has been so extensive, that I

venture to assert that our moral condition, regarded in reference to the peculiar state of the colony during the last four years, may bear comparison with that of any town in Europe. This is a bold assertion, in the face of all that has been said to the contrary; but I believe it to be a true one.

Our greatest safeguard is the absence of temptation. Any man, woman, or child can obtain a good living in Victoria by honest industry. Hence the temptation to act otherwise is removed. Our police is, perhaps, as efficient a body as can, in the present state of the colony, be organized; and detection is so sure to follow crime, that an honest life, both in the cities and at the diggings, is found to be far easier than one without the pale of the law. And that this conviction is general, the statistics of our colony sufficiently prove.

In no town is the Sabbath observed in a more strict and orderly manner than in Melbourne. Every shop and public-house is shut, and the churches present a striking contrast to those at home in one respect only—the pews are filled with young men—strong, vigorous, and fine-looking young men; and few elderly men or women are to be seen. The streets on the Sunday are crowded with the best-dressed population in the world—pictorial and oftentimes eccentric, I admit, but all decent and orderly.

To this attractive picture I have one exception to make, and I make it with sorrow; but truth requires me to admit that drinking habits prevail to a very great extent in Melbourne. This is owing to the freedom from restraint, the abundance of money, and to the free hospitality of the people; and, I may also add, the want of comfortable homes. To these causes are to be attributed almost the whole crime of the colony.

Scotland and the north of England may, I think, be considered as safe as any place in Europe; and crime, I imagine, is less there than in almost any other places. Yet, in this respect, they exceed our peaceful and much-calumniated colony of Victoria. In the prison report for that district of the United Kingdom, the criminal convictions were over four and three-quarters to the thousand throughout the entire population; whereas in Victoria, the criminal convictions were only two and a-half to the thousand, and that,

too, in the worst year, 1853,—little more than half the crime of Scotland! The fact is, a few daring robberies have been committed, which have been fully reported in the journals of the colony, and copied into every newspaper in the United Kingdom, till people, frequently reading these accounts, and taking the trouble to read little else about the colony, have come to the belief that it is a very dreadful place.

On the 30th April, 1837, the Rev. J. Clow married the first couple, and on the same day baptized the first child born in the colony. In 1852, no fewer than 2554 children were baptized, and 1409 marriages were celebrated; but there, nevertheless, remained at the beginning of 1855 an excess of men over women, in the colony of Victoria, of no fewer than 80,000. The sexes of the children born in the colony are about equal. We may therefore conclude that 80,000 wives are wanted,—one of the few articles of export which is safe, if sent in good condition and warranted sound.

The various religious denominations are well represented in Melbourne. The clergy are equal, in general qualifications, to those of any large English town, and far superior to them in catholicity of feeling. It cannot, however, be said that the country beyond Melbourne and Geelong is equally well provided for; and a sad want of properly-qualified men is felt at the diggings. Once on a Sunday morning I went to a place of worship in one of the principal diggings. At ten minutes to eleven the clergyman himself came with the key and opened the door. One drayman and myself were then the congregation assembled. By eleven A.M. we had twelve, and other eight came afterwards, making twenty in all. Notice was then given that the bell in future would not be rung, as they had no one to do it. The preacher was, no doubt, a man exemplary in all the relations of private life; but he was not the man suited for a rough, restless, and young population, such as is found at the diggings. He was an old man, wanting in energy and spirit, and therefore wanting in the very qualities likely to attract a large congregation. It must never be forgotten, in sending clergy to the diggings, that the character of the population is peculiar—consisting, as it does, of men of amazing energy, young, impulsive, generous, and restless; many of them men of good education, who have taken high honours at

their various Universities, and many others belonging to the best families of England and Scotland. These men must not be confounded with the mere English labourer: although their hands are hard, and their costume rough and *outré*, they have often polished tastes and intellectual minds. The observant stranger cannot fail to be struck with this peculiarity of the diggings—the rough exterior under which the gentleman in manners and education is frequently disguised, the real nobility which is often clad in a Guernsey shirt and a cabbage-tree hat.

Travelling through the bush one day, I came upon a couple of sawyers, one of whom attracted my notice from his commanding and aristocratic appearance. He was at least six feet two inches high, and wore a moustache that would have become a Life-guardsman. Clean and neat in his dress, he was altogether one of the handsomest young fellows I had seen. His history is easily told—it is that of many a man in Australia. He was a Cambridge man, was rather fast, and got into debt; his friends gave him £500, and sent him off to Australia. This sum, in his hands, did little more than see him landed. But here comes the difference between him and many others of his class. When his money was spent, he began to think what he should do for a living. He had been one of the best rowers at college, and his enormous strength of arm suggested to him the idea of trying sawing. He soon obtained employment, and he now saves money out of his earnings, which amount to from nine to twelve pounds a-week. But this I believe to be an exceptional case, even in Australia. The rule here is for fast young men to hang upon their friends as long as they can, and ultimately sink to the lowest depths of degradation, doing the most menial work, even in low public-houses. I have known the sons of the most respectable parents holding a good position at home, acting as stable-boys in public-house yards; and I have known them die in canvas tents, broken in constitution and spirit, the mere wrecks of men. No one here takes much notice of such cases—all are too busy; and sons of gentlemen are so common, that they attract no attention in their troubles, and are left to swim or sink, as they happen to have the courage to throw off their vices or otherwise. The colony is no place for prodigal sons.

If Christianity is to be maintained in the country districts and in the diggings, we must have men suited to the work—men who can sympathise with and enter into the wants, wishes, feelings—ay, and the prejudices—of such a people as are there congregated. The “bringers of good tidings” to the diggers must be young men with strong constitutions, who can “rough it” as well as their hearers—earnest, thoughtful, patient, enduring, faithful teachers. Such men, with proper educational qualifications, and possessed of true Christian spirit, are certain of success and ample support.

It must not be supposed that the youth of Australia are all of the unthinking, trifling, or vicious class: that the majority of them are pre-eminently the reverse, the attendance at the churches of Melbourne sufficiently testify. The Christian Young Men’s Associations, Mechanics’ Institutes, and the general good conduct, even at the diggings, bear testimony to the class of men now predominating in the colony. They have not shown themselves slow in rallying round those of the clergy who have recently pitched their tents among the gold-diggers, or found their homes in the crowded towns of Australia.

The Chinese residing on the diggings have recently petitioned the Government for land on which to build a church. This people, so slow at first to receive Christianity from its early teachers among them, now startle the world by the spectacle of a really Christian community. It is astonishing to observe how the vital principles of Christianity have penetrated their numerous population, that even here, amongst the gold-diggers, they have their Christian native teacher, and offer to build a church when land is granted them.

The total absence of gambling-houses is a most favourable characteristic of the place, and contrasts remarkably with San Francisco.

The colony ought to display an energy and morality far in advance of any other people. Let any one consider who, amongst the population of a village, or from the workers of a manufactory, have left for Australia. Are they the drunken spendthrifts? or are they the industrious, sober and saving, who, with a laudable ambition, have expatriated themselves from all they held most dear, that they might administer to the wants of an aged parent, or pro-

vide for a young and increasing family? Again, who are our merchants? Are they not men selected by the firms at home with whom they were connected, either as junior partners or as managing clerks, for their trustworthiness and capacity to carry out business combinations of vast magnitude and responsibility? Are merchants generally so dull as to select their worst men to fill positions of trust and importance away from all check or control, and involving transactions which neglect or mismanagement would seriously inconvenience, or perhaps ruin, the men who sent them out?

And who are our squatters? Are they not the younger sons of our best families—victims, oftentimes, of a law which deprives them of all participation in the paternal wealth—who, with unexampled fortitude and endurance, and by the exercise of patient and exemplary courage, have won for themselves estates, in many cases more valuable, and of far greater extent, than those of their elder brothers?

As I before observed, Victoria never was a convict settlement; and that, although a few desperate men have escaped from the adjoining colonies, their numbers are not so formidable as to neutralize the influence of the far greater proportion of superior colonists.

In concluding this chapter, I would suggest to the Presbyterian Church the necessity of appointing some prayers, as well as sermons, to be read on the sea voyage. These might also be used in the bush, where they are too far removed from a place of worship. This is a matter which urgently calls for inquiry. On board ship, the Scotch either read the Church of England prayers, or altogether suspend, for the time, any public worship. The Presbyterians, I am sorry to say, have not been well represented in the colony generally. Many unworthy sons of their church have now, however, either left the colony, or have ceased to exercise their clerical functions. In their place, a few men have latterly come out, who bid fair to retrieve their national character.

Various writers on Australia, have said bitter things of it and its people. It is true that the digger, with a heavy nugget in his pocket, sometimes forgets himself; nevertheless, taking the people at their worst, we have no fear for the future of the colony.

CHAPTER IX.

EMIGRATION: WHO SHOULD EMIGRATE, AND HOW.

THE present system of free emigration has brought a class of people to the colony, who, although they may be characterized as generally well-behaved and industrious, are wanting, in most cases, in those peculiar qualities which make the most useful and successful colonists. They are mostly a class of people who cannot help themselves, and, consequently, whom no one can help. Fortunately, this class is not numerous.

The emigrant who has paid his own way out of his own savings, is almost always a well-behaved man, of saving habits, and of forethought enough to provide, in times of prosperity, against those periods of crisis to which all countries, and particularly new ones, are subject. The very self-denial and courage required for the first saving qualifies them for that state of self-denial and perseverance which makes the successful colonist.

This latter class has great injustice done him by the present system. The land is kept out of the market till it will average upwards of 40s. per acre, and little or no good land is sold at this price. The amount thus raised from the land he buys, is used to bring out labourers free; thus, he has first to pay for himself, and then, with his savings in the colony, which he invests in land, has to pay for others. In America and the Canadas, land can be had for selection at five shillings per acre; but we should outbid the Americans, and allow the emigrant land to cultivate on licence, in the same way as we have allowed the sheep-farmer land for his sheep-runs, or the gold-digger land from which to dig gold. Why should the most useful and best class of emigrants be worse cared-for than the squatter or digger? I would at once throw open certain districts for cultivation at a licence fee, or nominal rental of one shilling per acre, binding them only to cultivate

and fence in; at the same time securing them at least a five years' lease, with right to purchase. Such a measure would at once save to the colony, annually, nearly as much as all the purchase-money of the land as it is now sold. We should immediately save above £2,000,000 now sent to the United States, to Europe, and the other colonies, to purchase food for man and horse. We should, under such a system, be able in a year or two to supply all our own markets, and in four or five years make all our own wine, brandy, &c. I have known many men leave the colony because they could not get land. Some went to America, and others to the adjoining colonies. No man, after he has made money, will continue to endure the discomforts of a digger's life. He then turns his attention to land, and failing to obtain it on remunerative terms, he is driven into store-keeping, or he goes into the towns, to add to their already overcrowded state. Emigration, like trade, should be free from all impediments and bounties, and left to its own healthy action, holding out all inducements to the enterprising and industrious, by removing in the colony every impediment to his settling fairly on the waste lands; lands which cannot, under any circumstances, be occupied for many ages to come. The question for the Government is, in what way emigrants of the right sort can be most quickly obtained; and when obtained, how they shall find profitable employment. I shall not further waste time to prove what every sensible man admits; that the great interest of the colony is to attain to this end—get people so long as there is plenty of room for them. The true system of emigration is well understood in America, and every effort is made to direct and keep up the stream. It is found that so long as people pour into the country, prosperity increases; and when the stream stops or slackens, prosperity decreases. The first effect of allowing the waste lands to be cultivated, would be the saving of the £2,000,000 now sent out of the country for the purchase of food; the next effect would be the formation of a settled, orderly, happy, and contented population, as most agricultural populations in a new country are. The ultimate effect would be to tempt a large immigration from all parts of Europe, and so materially assist the progress and prosperity of the colony.

We have tried the old system of selling the land by auction,

from a pound the acre, and upwards, and applying the proceeds to shipping out labourers. That system has only one effect, that of keeping down wages, while cheap labour was all that the squatter required to enable him to herd his sheep and cattle. This system, instead of tempting labourers to the colony, has had the contrary effect, and they have gone to America in a continually increasing stream. Till the gold was discovered in Australia, few free emigrants came; those who did, instead of sending money to their friends to bring them out, could scarcely make better wages than at home, and held out no encouragement for them to emigrate.

The old system from 1838 to the middle of 1851 (13½ years), the beginning of the gold era, brought out to the colony only 29,196 emigrants in all. The unassisted immigration for the two years 1852 and 1853, after the discovery of the gold, brought to the colony no fewer than 156,921 people. This at least proves that unassisted immigration is the most powerful. But some may say that the gold tempted the thousands to leave their homes. True, it did; and if land were easily obtainable, a yet more powerful inducement would exist. Not only would many more come out, but instead of merely making money and returning to England, they would stay in the colony. Victoria, therefore, has everything to gain by allowing the free cultivation of the land, and nothing to lose. If emigrants were certain of being able to obtain land, the funds raised from its sale need not be spent in assisting emigration, which would then go on of itself.

I think it cannot be denied that the present system has entirely failed in its object. It has brought us inferior immigrants; it has lowered wages, and prevented an enterprising and useful class of immigrants from reaching the colony; it has raised the price of land, and kept it out of the market, and made the colonists dependent on foreign supply for food; it has caused great discontent at the diggings; it has caused thousands to leave the colony,—many of them after they had made money by gold digging,—and to settle as farmers in other countries; it has lost us customers for our merchandise, and deprived the Government of its best subjects and tax-payers.

I am well aware how much opposed are these views to the

ideas entertained by most of our old colonists who have speculated in land, and who wish to keep up its price; also, how averse the squatters are to part with any portion of their sheep-runs. But private interests must give way to the public good; and I have no fear but that, whatever course may be eventually adopted in regard to the land question in Australia, the powerful interests of the squatters will have ample justice done them.

The Family Colonization Loan Society, projected by Mrs. Chisholm, has done little for the colony as far as numbers go—1201 only being the number of assisted immigrants up to 1854; but the design is good. The intention being to bring relations together, it has been the means of bringing wives to husbands and children to parents, and is worthy of greater encouragement than it at present receives, either in the colony or in the mother country.

There is a most urgent desire expressed at this moment in the diggings for wives for the men of nuggets. In 1851, as already stated, the male population of Victoria was 15,000 in excess of the females; and this disproportion, so far from diminishing, has increased, and we have now about 100,000 men, all wanting wives. But Mrs. Chisholm's refuse stock of needlewomen, and worse, are not of the class required. The men who have had the pluck to leave all that was dear and loved at home, for the uncertain and distant prospect of success in Australia, now that they have succeeded in their material interests, are not the men blindly to neutralize that success by uniting their fortunes with the unfortunate spinsters of doubtful reputation, who have been sent out for that purpose. No; the idea is repulsive: they will remain bachelors for life rather than select from such a stock. But let fathers bring out their families of respectable, domesticated, and well-behaved young girls, and they will not have much difficulty in discovering some out of this 100,000 bachelors too glad to get good wives.

In 1853, out of 14,578 assisted emigrants, no fewer than 6737, or nearly a-half, could not write, and 4339 could neither read nor write. We are getting by this enormous outlay of colonial money the weeding-out of the home population,—the worthless and immoral of both sexes, particularly the females.

It is not correct to say that shopkeepers, clerks, and such like,

are unsuitable as emigrants. This is only true of them if they are effeminate in their habits or constitutions. If they are healthy, industrious, and moral young men, they are sure to get on in Australia. I put particular emphasis on this latter qualification. If they are not admirers of moral beauty,—if they have not kept themselves free from vice, they should not think of emigrating: they want the moral courage to grapple with the difficulties in their way at their first entry upon colonial life.

To the man of small capital, the steady and industrious artizan, the tradesman, and even to the gentlemen of the United Kingdom, the wide savannahs of Australia offer fields for the exercise of their talents and the profitable employment of their small means, which do not, and perhaps never will, exist at home. In England, every man competes with his neighbour for a share of the wealth belonging to the class immediately above him in the social scale. Many fall in the struggle, and many more, sick and weary with toil, make no effort to improve their worldly fortunes. While capital in the hands of some is allowed to lie idle and profitless, for the want of a knowledge of good and safe investments, the very lives of others are passed in squalid misery and hopeless poverty. To all these, emigration offers remedy and relief. In the “lands across the sea,” the roads to wealth are wider and less crowded than at home. There the climates are more auspicious, and the virgin soils wait but the spade of the husbandman to make them fruitful and abundant. There the supply of labour is not equal to the demand, and want and misery are consequently unknown. The small capitalist need feel no fear of not realizing sufficient from the earth to satisfy his present wants, and enable him to lay by something for his children. The mechanic or artizan need no longer look with dread to an increase of his family, for every child that is born to his house adds to his wealth; and the unskilled labourer who, in the old country, was a pauper from the fact that too many of his class existed already, becomes a valuable pioneer of civilization abroad, be he tending a flock of sheep in the broad meadows of Australia, felling trees, or digging gold at Ballarat or Bendigo.

The advantages of emigration may be thus briefly enumerated:—

1. By emigration there is provided a means of employing small sums of money to the greatest advantage, in the purchase and cultivation of land, the growing of vegetables, fruits, hay, potatoes, in dairy produce, the poultry-yard, &c.

2. A way is opened for the ultimate independence and relief from toil of a large and increasing body of workmen, skilled in the various arts necessary to the erection of towns, houses, bridges, roads, canals, and the other immediate requirements of a new colony.

3. To artizans not coming into the above enumeration, but skilled in the more sedentary arts of civilized society,—such as bakers, cooks, printers, and, in a small degree, shopmen and clerks,—the various fields of emigration offer high wages and certain employment.

4. To all that large and ill-paid body of men dependent on agriculture and field labour for a subsistence, emigration opens a wide and profitable source of employment,—hut-keepers, shepherds, and other labourers, receiving at this moment in Australia from £45 to £100 a-year wages, besides rations and house.

5. To unskilled labourers in general, to domestic servants especially respectable females, and to all who have the strength and the will to work, emigration offers a ready and easy way of bettering their several conditions.

And lastly, emigration, while it improves the condition of the persons actually brought within its operation, cannot fail, from the very nature of things, to render competition in the labour-market less fierce than hitherto, and thus eventually to rescue the home-staying workman from the evils of idleness and the fears of poverty. An emigration trades' union would benefit all parties.

My advice, then, to all lazy merchants' clerks, incompetent shopmen, proud pauper gentlemen, consumptive mechanics, and vicious do-littles, prodigals, gamblers, drunkards, men-about-town, bill-discounting attorneys, pimps, thieves, and disappointed authors, is—to *stay at home*. Such people are not wanted in the colonies. There is no eating without working in Australia; labour is the price that *must* be paid for food, shelter, clothing, and all kinds of comforts and luxuries in the emigrant's chosen country, wherever it be. Hard toil, strict economy, perfect honesty, temperate habits, and indomitable perseverance, are the only roads

to honour and independence. If a man possesses not these, his success in the colonies will be very problematical. But for the sober and hard-working, the able-bodied and industrious, the prudent and persevering, the brave and faithful, emigration cannot but be advantageous. In the gold-fields and agricultural districts of Australia, the man with a small capital will do well; if he has a large family all the better. For those of larger capital, sheep-farming, or squatting, is still one of the most profitable undertakings. Small stations may be entered upon with a capital of from £1000 to £4000, and large stations with from £5000 to £20,000, for, although the purchase may be considerably more, with good credit with the merchant, these sums will be enough to start with; and the fat stock, wool, &c., will pay the last instalments. The mechanic and skilled workman, the shepherd, the railway excavator, and, indeed, all who have stout hearts, healthy bodies, strong limbs, and *good characters* to boot, will succeed in the colonies. In a word, the classes most likely to succeed in Australia, are those who have been used to agricultural work, capitalists, and workmen of the numerous trades connected with house-building, road and bridge-making, and the rearing and tending of cattle and sheep—in fact, handicraftsmen of all descriptions.

No man should determine to emigrate without making himself thoroughly acquainted with the nature of the colony to which he is going. In the years 1826 to 1829 a large emigration to Western Australia took place; but the Swan River Settlement which resulted, proved a complete and ruinous failure. Why? Because the emigrants neither understood the nature of the country to which they were going, nor the kind of labour required of them when they arrived there. An emigrant should be strong, active, willing, and able to turn his hand to anything; and the work that he has to do cannot be done in kid gloves. Shortly afterwards, many hundreds suffered from an ill-considered emigration to Canada; and even so lately as 1849, we find it reported that in many parts of the United States, where land is sold cheaply, that disease and death most certainly await the emigrants. In acquiring all the information he can, the emigrant must be careful to distinguish between the pure and impure sources of such information. In America, it is the custom of the land-jobbers to

publish delusive *Guides* and *Handbooks*, which contain no reliable information, and are written, as Samuel Sidney truly observes, in the "spirit of a recruiting crimp." Such books are sometimes printed in England. Beware of all works on emigration which are issued from the presses of obscure publishers. Do not purchase land without first seeing it. Make no bargains with shipping-agents, if there be a respectable ship-broker in the town. In Liverpool, it has been the custom of certain parties to employ runners and crimps to beset emigrants as soon as they get out of the railway train or set foot upon the wharf. Have nothing to do with them. They are generally keepers of lodging and coffee-houses, who, while they appear to charge reasonably enough for the accommodation they afford, derive a large profit from the passenger-brokers and the tradesmen to whom they introduce the unfortunate victim.

It matters comparatively little what you start with,—whether you engage as sheepkeeper or what not, a merchant's clerk or a day labourer: once in Australia, the emigrant begins either to rise or fall to his true position; and a few years will find him in his right place.

For clothing, the emigrant can easily calculate what he requires for three months, chiefly of cold weather; but he had better be provided for all weathers. Make inquiry if the cabins are supplied with sheets, blankets, and furniture. A few instructive books should be taken. Let the emigrant remember that the character he makes himself on board-ship will most probably stick to him in the colony for either good or evil.

Then, with regard to ships. London and Liverpool are the two best ports; the ships are generally of better quality, better found, and the owners more liberal in their treatment of passengers. The larger the ships the more easy to sail in: once out to sea, they are more like houses than ships. English money is current in Australia. Be particular that the scale of diet is at least equal to that afforded in the Government emigration ships; and fail not to make inquiries as to whether the vessel carries any quantity of sulphuric acid, oil, salt, or patent fuel; *all of which are either dangerous or offensive on board ship*. Look to the number of the ship's boats, chains, and life buoys; and ascertain if the captain is a

sober man. With regard to the sea passage, and on your arrival at the colony, make up your mind to bear many hardships, inconveniences, trials, and troubles with good temper and moderation; guard against a spirit of gambling or reckless speculation; be cautious in choosing your companions; keep your own secrets—while they are confined to your own breast you are their master, reveal them to others, and you become their slave; be never ashamed of working hard, so it be honest work, nor too proud to be seen about it; cultivate a kindly and hospitable spirit; and, above all, be religious. So shall you prosper wherever your lot be cast, and your life shall become a blessing to yourself, and your home in the wilderness be merry with the sound of children's voices. Thus shall you

“Build amid the desert hoar
Another England on another shore;
Or rear above our old ancestral hill
A better, brighter, worthier if you will!”

There are many striking cases of success even among the new arrivals. I was greatly pleased to come upon a cattle station one day, in a far, out-of-the-way district. I was heartily welcomed by an old man about seventy years of age. He had but recently come to the colony; his respectable appearance, his lonely condition, and his hearty welcome, all tended greatly to interest me; and, on better acquaintance, he recited to me an outline of his struggles and ultimate success in the colony. He had been a land steward in the north of England, an agricultural improver, and inventor of several implements; but he had grown old, was not so much esteemed, and, withal, had saved little for his old age. Full of pluck, however, he emigrated, bought in Melbourne tea, sugar, &c., and sent them off to the diggings in a dray, and then passed on himself to wait their arrival. He waited for weeks, but they did not come. Meantime, he had been making a careful survey of the diggings, and discovered a place which had been abandoned in consequence of the holes filling with water; this was known to be a very rich spot—his practised eye at once discovered that it could be drained by sending a shaft from a lower level. He formed a party of workers and set-to; in a few weeks they had accomplished their work, and he had made three thousand pounds.

His tea and sugar had been stolen. He has settled quietly in a beautiful country abounding in game, and has a capital garden. His brother has joined him; a countrywoman, neat and tidy, keeps his house, and he has now abundance, and may end his days in comfort, free of worldly care.

Emigrants are still pouring into the United States of America, where labour, in the large towns, is now little better paid, and not more easily obtained, than it is at home. They forget that when they reach New York, their journey and their difficulties are but begun, and that then they have many weeks of travel through a strange and foreign country, by canal, by railway, and then by drays, before they can reach their destination, where their labour will be valuable, or where the agriculturist can get a farm. And then he is removed far distant from a market. He, in fact, may, with hard labour and good health, have a rough abundance; but in a lifetime he and his family will not save as much money as a washerwoman can in Melbourne in one year. Besides, at Melbourne your journeying is nearly ended. A few miles (five to thirty), and you have a choice of land at from £1 to £10 per acre, a market provided, which, in many cases, has paid in one year the whole cost of land, and expense of crops, implements, and labour, leaving the land for ever freehold. These are facts which the labourer and the farmer ought to be made acquainted with. It is full time the tide of emigration was turned towards Australia, with its fine climate, and rich soil requiring only labour. Customers are already provided at the very door of the farmer, ready to purchase whatever he may grow. I am supposing that the farmer has the capital to pay this enormous price for his land, in which case, if prices keep up as they have, it will do all I have said.

It is difficult to discover what is the object of the numbers who have of late returned from Australia. I endeavoured to ascertain this on board the "Great Britain" steamer. We had about twenty-three passengers in the saloon: three married couples returning to see friends and educate their families—all had made fortunes; nine single men, most of them understood to have incomes of from £1,000 to £5,000, and suspected of intending to get married, and all intending to return; two young ladies, one a

governess; four doctors who had taken out emigrant ships; one captain and his wife, who had taken out a ship. In the other parts of the ship several families were returning with moderate fortunes—they had mostly been working-people. A large portion were gold-diggers, who had made money; £4,000 worth of gold was bought from this class in the course of one day. One party of six had cleared £24,000 from one hole, with which they were returning. Several were known to be on their way to America, to buy land. Several clerks, from Liverpool and elsewhere, had made money at gold-digging. One man, working his passage home, had £3,000, which he had dug up and put in the captain's hands. Very few, indeed, either admitted or had the appearance of being unsuccessful.

Friends at home complain often that those in the colony do not write. It should be borne in mind what are the difficulties of a digger's situation, and great allowance should be made for him: he has no desk to write on, no room to write in, his tent generally crowded with his companions, smoking and talking, and his bed his only table. Worn out with the labour of the day, it is no easy matter to write, even supposing he has been thoughtful enough to procure pens, ink, and paper. But how cruel for those living with friends in comfort, with every appliance at hand, to forget the poor emigrant, who, isolated from friends, surrounded with the thoughtless, and often dissipated, feels himself indeed desolate when he thinks of his far-off home, and his friends, who have sent him no letters.

The route which must ultimately carry the passenger traffic will not be by the Cape of Good Hope, nor Cape Horn—the distance is too great; and the ice so frequently met with on these routes renders it not so safe as the way by Panama. But this route by Panama does not possess the advantages which the overland European does: it is further by three thousand miles, and passes seas as stormy and as unhealthy. The Oriental Steam Navigation Company are in possession of the route, but they have not attempted to carry any but first-class passengers. The passage across the desert presents obstacles to the conveyance of large numbers at a cheap rate; but as that difficulty will soon be partly removed by railway, it does appear that a cheap arrange-

ment for the thousands might be made by this route to carry passengers in from forty to fifty days. The following is extracted from the *Argus* of October, 1854:—

“The probable results of voyages on the respective routes by equally large and powerful steamers, carrying twenty days’ fuel, and capable of steaming alone ten knots per hour, are as follows:—

FOR SYDNEY.

	Days.	Hours.
1st European Overland Direct, via Diego Garcia	56	4
2nd American “ “ “ “ “	59	3
3rd European, via Galle	59	8

FOR PORT PHILIP.

1st European Overland Direct, via Diego Garcia	51	16
2nd “ “ “ via Galle	54	20
3rd Oceanic, via Cape of Good Hope	60	5

“It is thus apparent that the mail may be carried by the direct European Overland Route to and fro, between London and both Sydney and Port Philip, in six days’ less time than by any other route. That by the same route, somewhat extended, by calling at Galle, the mail may be carried to and fro between London and Port Philip in nine days less than by any other way, and to and fro between London and Sydney in the same time as by the direct American Overland Route, within eleven hours.

“If the steamers of the General Screw Steam Company were to call at Diego Garcia, the direct European Overland would not only carry quick Mauritius mails, but keep up a communication between the Cape of Good Hope, the Mauritius, and the colonies of Australia. The want of a regular communication here is much felt. Three small steamers running between Sydney and Singapore, through Torres Straits, could easily keep up a monthly communication with Java, the Straits, China, Manilla, India, and Ceylon, and at an expense within the means of the colonies to pay for themselves.”

If we can trust the statement of Mr. Scott Russell, his new ship will be able to compete with the overland route. He promises that the great ship he is building shall perform the journey to Australia *and back* in sixty days! He confidently predicts the attainment of a speed of twenty-four miles per hour, which will

enable emigrants to reach America in less than three days from Galway to Halifax. His new ship is to carry all her own coals, 600 first class, and 1000 second class passengers, whose fares would amount to £120,000! The secret of speed, he says, is length of hull and convexity of water line, so that the opposition of the ship to the body of the water should be as slow and gradual as possible. To get a speed of twenty-four miles per hour, four hundred feet of length is said to be necessary; but the new ship is to be 675 feet long, 60 feet deep, and 83 feet wide. This is a bold experiment, and deserves success.

The following is copied from the *Examiner*, and is well worth the attention of sea-captains:—

“SIMPLE PRECAUTIONS AGAINST SEA RISKS.—In an account of the wreck of the *John*, emigration ship, upon the *Manacles*, there is the usual statement, which might be stereotyped for such occasions, that a boat when lowered into the water was found to be unplugged and unprovided with thowles. Let us explain that there is a hole in most boats to let out any water that may be in them when they are hoisted inboard, and that sailors make it a most scrupulous care not to replace the plug in the hole when the boat is drained dry, nor in any place where it might be expected to be found. The consequence often is, that the boat fills with water when launched, and that lives are lost through the neglect of the simplest precaution. We have often suggested that the plug should have a lanyard attached to it, so that when out of the hole it would always be in its place close by when wanted. This may seem a trifling matter of arrangement, but if you were escaping from a wrecked ship, and found the water bubbling up in the bottom of the boat in which lay your only hope of safety, you would feel what it is in such jeopardy to know or not to know where to find a cork or bit of stick to save the boat from filling and sinking. One of the boats of the *Amazon* would have foundered if a brave boy had not had the presence of mind to stop the plughole with his thumb, which he had to keep in the place for some hours. The thowles also are never to be found, and without them the oars cannot be shipped. The cook generally prefers the thowles for lighting his fires, when they happen to be wooden pins; if they are of iron they are found handy for many purposes, always excepting their proper use. Certain it is that

they are never to be found when wanted. Like the plug, they should be attached to the rowlock by a piece of yarn or a small chain; the latter would be preferable as less easy to sever. The difficulty of securing these little precautions, so important to safety in the event of disaster, is hardly to be conceived by persons unacquainted with the reckless character of seamen. There are three neglects dear to Jack; three precautions he abominates: lights, the leadline, and boats. He will never show a light if he can help it; he cannot abide the idea of rotting the leadline by wetting it, and would keep it as carefully dry as powder itself; and he hates to see a boat in order for launching when there is no immediate occasion. He regards a boat as the proper lumber place of a ship, especially appropriate for hencoops. The idea of precaution against danger is disagreeable and repugnant. It will be time enough to think about boats when they can be of use to carry thirsty souls to a spirit shop. The carelessness of seamen in these respects is incurable; and it is only by putting negligence out of their power by better and stricter mechanical arrangements that safety can be provided for."

And now, by way of conclusion to this chapter, we may be allowed to say a word or two on the **ADVANTAGES OF EMIGRATION**:

By emigration, the parent state—no matter whether it be England, Ireland, Scotland, or Germany—is relieved of what is called its surplus population; and this, too, by a cheap and advantageous method. In nearly all ages of the world, the evils of a too-full city or state have been experienced; and thus arose those great immigrations from the east—those great waves of population which peopled the western parts of Europe, and founded kingdoms and dynasties where there had hitherto existed only wandering tribes of savages.

In this way, too, the prairies of the great American continents, and the, as yet, unknown wilds of Australia and the islands of the South Pacific Ocean, will eventually be freed of their present inhabitants, to become new homes for the great Celtic and Saxon families of mankind. The command to "replenish the earth and subdue it" was not surely given in a narrow or sectarian spirit,—not to Adam alone, but to all his descendants. And, taking this view of the subject, the removal of masses of men from the

crowded cities of civilization and commerce to the unexplored wildernesses of the earth, would seem to be a special ordination of an overruling Providence. But it has been, and is even now, necessary that some extremely powerful motive should impel the masses. In nearly all cases of extensive emigration, the real or supposed possession of mineral wealth has supplied the stimulus; and when the new lands were full of inhabitants, the gold of which they came in search has shrunk gradually and insensibly away, and people employed themselves in other and not less profitable ways. And so it will, doubtless, eventually prove in regard to California and Australia.

In all ages of the world gold has been found in abundance; in fact, it appears to have been pretty equally distributed over the earth's surface. The Egyptians and Hebrews were evidently well acquainted with its use and value. Darius of Persia, and Cræsus of Lydia, drew tribute of gold and silver from their subjects. The ancients obtained it from Africa, just as we do now—probably from the mines of Nubia and Æthiopia; the indefatigable Romans crossed the Pyrenees and penetrated Spain, braved the seas and conquered Britain, in their search for gold; the Tartars and the Russians of old times dug deep down into the mines of Sweden and Norway, Hungary and Siberia, and diligently searched through the valleys of that great mountain chain—the Ural—that separates Europe from Asia, and blasted rocks and turned aside the courses of rivers, so that they might get rich all at once. In the fifteenth century, Columbus discovered the “golden Americas;” in the sixteenth, Pizarro conquered Peru, and Cortez overcame the Montezuma of Mexico; and the Spaniards, then masters, got drunk and debased, and finally ruined themselves, with the riches found so plentifully in the New World. Coming nearer to our own times, we know that the Dutch, in the last century, fitted out an expedition to California for the special purpose of discovering gold. They went, and found none, though they traversed the valley of the Sacramento through and through, and looked with eager eyes upon “the everlasting rocks of quartz” since discovered to be so rich in virgin gold; and so they came back again, and reported it “a barren and desolate land.”

The discoveries of gold in California and Australia have been

described as *accidental*; but only careless men use this term; deeper thinkers see in these discoveries a recognition of that *onward* action to which we have already alluded, and anticipate the time when great nations shall arise from these now comparatively insignificant gatherings of men.

With regard to our own country, the *necessity* for emigration becomes every day more and more apparent. Not so much, however, as regards the men and women who depart, as for the sake of those who remain at home. It is not necessary in this place to do more than hint at the subject of wages, in connexion with the emigration movement now in progress; it is sufficient for us to say that while, in various parts of the world, millions of acres lie unreclaimed, and wait the occupation of man, the necessity for emigration must not only continue, but, in fact, prove the safety-valve for labour.

In the crowded cities of Europe, labourers are often in excess of the demand for their labour; in the colonies, labour is plentiful and labourers *scarce*. The conclusion is obvious. It may, at first sight, appear a hard thing to be compelled to leave our homes, the associations of our youth, and everything which habit has rendered dear to us; and for the man of independent means, or even a tolerably good chance of success in his profession or calling, there is no place in the world like England; but to those who see no prospect of eventual independence, who can lay by nothing from their earnings to support them in their old age, emigration presents its fairest and most inviting face. If we look only upon Australia and the other colonies, not as a foreign land, but simply as other portions of our own great and glorious country,—distant so many days' journey from our old homes—the repugnance naturally felt at leaving England is at once overcome, and we anticipate our association in the future with a people speaking the same language, owning the same mild, paternal sway, and possessing the same national feelings and traditions as ourselves, with delight instead of dread. “Had I my life to begin over again,” writes one from Australia, “I would come out here; for, though I myself might have been more comfortable at home, I enjoy the satisfaction of providing well for my family through my own exertions,—a satisfaction I could never have felt in England.”

To tell a man now-a-days that he is better off in a new country, where the inhabitants are scattered over a wide space, and the opportunities of becoming independent are many, than in the over-crowded cities of Europe, with the chances of ultimate relief from toil daily becoming fewer and fewer, is but to repeat a truism. Who can look upon the condition of the working classes in the United Kingdom, and not admit that any change which has the effect of relieving the labour-market of some of its surplus hands must be a change for the better, both for those who emigrate and those who stay at home? In fact, men are just beginning to take a philosophical view of the subject of emigration, and to understand the full meaning of the Divine command—"Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it;" so that the curse may at last be turned into a comparative blessing—that in the "sweat of their faces" the descendants of Adam may "eat bread."

CHAPTER X.

GOLD-DIGGERS AND DIGGINGS IN VICTORIA.

I HAVE already referred to both gold-diggers and diggings; but the importance of the subject must be my excuse for again, and more fully, noticing this most remarkable phase of Australian life.

The perfect freedom and thorough independence of a gold-digger's life must be truly enchanting to the youth of energy, adventure, and courage. Everything is fresh and new to him. Nothing he has experienced in the old country has given him the slightest idea of the endless variety of scenes, and the numerous objects of interest, which are open to his gaze in the new colony. From the moment he sets foot in Melbourne, all is full of interest. The road to the diggings, whether he is poor and has to walk, or has money and can ride or drive, is full of adventure.

The honest independence of these fellows, I confess, I liked exceedingly. I never got a saucy answer from one of them; but not one of them will touch his hat to you. The gold-digger feels himself free and independent; and, although inclined to be civil and good-natured, he is not the least disposed to admit of any superiority, or to be servile to anybody. I confess, to a new comer, the digger's general aspect is rather of the banditti order. With their long beards and rough exterior, and sometimes with fowling-pieces over their shoulders, they look rather threatening. A few civil words, however, and this first impression is soon dispelled, and you discover honest and true-hearted men, who have worked hard for their gold, and are now, perhaps, returning, after months of absence, privation, and hard work, to their loving wives and darling infants, with their home affections strong as ever, and their pockets well filled with nuggets. During my visits to the various gold-fields, I travelled alone and unarmed, and diverged

into all sorts of out-of-the-way tracts. I was well mounted, and my object was simply to see whatever I could, being determined to arrive, if possible, at the truth with regard to the diggers..

At this period I was fully possessed of the popular delusion, that the road to the diggings was a dangerous one; and my friends advised me by all means to take my revolver with me. But this I declined, preferring rather to be quietly dispossessed, if need be, of any valuables I had about me, than to run the risk of taking a life I could never restore. I had made up my mind to use my wits, and receive them civilly, whatever might befall. For three weeks I rode over the wildest parts of the country, sometimes alone and sometimes in company with a party of diggers; but, during all that time, I never had occasion to fear for the safety of either my purse or person. On the contrary, I met with many agreeable and intelligent men in coarse garments, with many rough sailors, and lots of queer fellows, but I never encountered a robber.

I have elsewhere shown that crime is less frequent in this colony than in the best parts of the United Kingdom; and who in England goes about armed, or in dread of robbery, because a drunken fellow reeling home at night is now and then ill-used and robbed? I feel assured that many cases of "sticking up" are only personal squabbles; others are cases of drunkards, who, as it were, tempt the depredators; while many are pure fictions, the result of cowardice and tipsy fancies.

Suppose two such cowardly parties meet. They both look like banditti; and each party, thinking the other a troop of robbers, look to their arms and prepare for defence. With savage looks they view each other sternly and doubtfully. Perhaps the one party is more courageous than the other, and is in want of some article of food. They then depute the bravest of their number to ride over to the opposite party, and ask if they will sell some flour. This is taken as a *reconnaissance* by the party visited, and the daring obtruder is sternly called to halt, and asked what he wants. His courage, perhaps, fails; and each party departs, satisfied in their own minds that by their courage and presence of mind they have had a fortunate escape from being "stuck up" and robbed. Each, of course, tells the story to their friends at home, and so, in

time, two good and true cases of attempted "sticking up" appear in the newspapers; when, if the truth were known, each party was as innocent of intent to injure or rob, as they were of cannibalism. I do not mean to say that instances of "sticking up" do not sometimes occur, even to sober men; but the cases are extremely rare, and certainly, in Melbourne, do not happen more frequently than in Liverpool or Glasgow.

After a careful personal inspection of the diggings, and a good acquaintance with the diggers, I am of opinion that, taking into account the very heterogeneous character of the population of the gold-fields, the diggers are a well-behaved, sober, industrious class of men, and that they form most desirable pioneers of civilization in a new country like Australia.

It should ever be borne in mind, that prosperity is a great trial. A man who never in his life, perhaps, possessed a hundred pounds at one time, may well feel his head a little giddy when he finds himself suddenly worth thousands. He needs all his care and prudence to prevent his newly-acquired riches running away with his senses; and if he does commit a few extravagances, who can blame him? But the mischief is, that the whole colony suffers in reputation from these occasional outbreaks of extravagant and riotous recklessness, and the many are blamed for the sins of the few.

The bush is the term applied by the colonists to the woods throughout the country, and the roads to the diggings are mostly through the bush. The roads from Melbourne to the diggings are execrable, and are avoided as much as possible by horsemen. Hundreds of dead bullocks and horses are found strewn along their sides, as well as broken carts and drays, with, oftentimes, their contents buried in the mud. The annual cost of cartage, and loss of goods, time, &c., in making the passage to and from the diggings, is sufficient to construct a railway and leave a surplus besides. In the chapter on Land and Tramways I have made a calculation for a line of this description.

The forest round Melbourne, and up to the Mount Alexander diggings, consists, to a large extent, of small timber trees, generally about eighteen inches to four feet in diameter, and many of them charred black at the roots by bush fires. The country is

generally sufficiently open to enable the horseman to gallop freely through the forest. I know of no more invigorating and exciting ride, when well mounted, than through the Australian bush. The spirits rise, and the troubles of the anxious and careworn heart are, for the time, forgotten. The horse, too, appears to participate in the feelings of its rider. He pricks up his ears, prances proudly, and away he goes in the easy, ambling canter peculiar to the Australian bush-horse, keeping all the while a steady look-out for fallen trees, stumps, or other snares, which he carefully avoids or clears; while the rider, on the other hand, must look out for branches a-head. The forest is always green, both in summer and winter. The trees are full of the most gaily-plumaged birds, which, although they possess not the song of the skylark, have yet a happy and pleasing note, which cheers and amuses the traveller on his way. In the season, the ground is strewn with wild flowers of every hue; and no noxious animals lurk under cover of their umbrageous luxuriance. The drawbacks to the scene are all of man's own making.

A group of natives are now and then to be met with in the bush. They seem to be most miserable beings. As among other savages, the women do all the work, while the men lie idle in the sun. Thus in the bush you see the poor squaws labouring under heavy loads, while the men burden themselves with little or nothing. No legislative care can improve the native race. Laws for their protection have been made, and able and kind-hearted men appointed to assist and protect them; but all in vain. Originally they were few in number, and they are daily getting fewer. They cultivated and fenced in none of the rich lands around them; they built no houses, and had no fixed place of abode. They were mere wanderers, as they are now. Then they had to hunt for their subsistence; but this mode of life they have now almost entirely abandoned, preferring the charity of the squatter to the exertions of the field. They hold, in fact, a position similar in every respect to that of the gypsies at home, and are met with in just such groups, and are quite as harmless. They are now better fed and better clothed, by the charity of the white man, than they ever were in their native state. A law is passed prohibiting any one from giving them spirits, and many efforts have been made to

civilize and educate them, but without effect. Some kind-hearted families have treated them more like their children than as strangers and savages, and have apparently succeeded in gaining their affections; but civilized life has always been found a restraint to them, and the charm of the forest and freedom too great to be resisted, so that, sooner or later, the comfortable warm clothing, the shelter of the house, and the abundance of food provided for them, have been abandoned for the bush, where they roam about savage, naked, and often in want of food, but quite harmless. Very few of them have tried the diggings, and I am not aware that any of them have ever succeeded as diggers.

It is a mere mawkish philanthropy to talk, as some do talk, of the injustice of depriving such men of land which they never possessed any more than the kangaroo or the cockatoo. The land was given to man to possess and to cultivate, not to lie waste; and I question the right, even of the white man who has paid for it, to allow large tracts to remain idle and uncultivated, if they are required, as in the Highlands of Scotland, for work or food for the people.

Almost every new-comer goes to the diggings, either to try his luck for himself, or to see what they are like. Everyone, however, is not suited for the work required in order to make gold-digging profitable; and many are the fine gentlemen who are disgusted when they find that they have to labour harder than "papa's gardener" at home; and, after all, can scarcely make a living. They, of course, write home no very flattering accounts of the diggings; as in that way only can they justify their own want of success. Gold-finding is work for hard-working men only; and for such men no other field of labour in the world is comparable. Wages of from five to ten pounds per week can always be obtained, with the additional chance of discovering gold to the value of hundreds, or even thousands, of pounds. To such men the work can scarcely be considered very exhausting. They, doubtless, have to live in tents; but, in such a climate as Victoria, a tent forms as comfortable a dwelling, certainly, as the houses they have been accustomed to live in at home. Their food is good and abundant; their health is generally good; their spirits

light and joyous; and, above all, to the enterprising there is hope—the blessed hope of a speedy independence.

Gentlemen diggers are not numerous in Victoria, and few of them are very successful. Indeed, to a man used to the luxuries and refinements of life in Europe, the labour of the gold-digger is very irksome. There is a want of occupation for the mind, which makes it intolerable to some; but I have known several gentlemen who, exhausted with mental labour at home, have not only recovered the elasticity of both mind and body, but have well-filled their pockets besides: but, after all, the navy is the true digger.

As a class, the diggers are not given to great excesses, although the nature of the employment would certainly tend to produce such habits. It is well known at home that certain trades, requiring extreme bodily exertion, and of a monotonous description,—such as that of sawyers and hewers of stone,—tend to cause a recoil from the labour and monotony of the work to excitement, which generally takes the form of drinking. Such is also the tendency of gold-digging; but the habit of drinking is not, certainly, so general among the diggers as has been represented—in fact, not more so, if so much, as in the same class of men in Great Britain.

The late discontent at the diggings, and particularly the outbreak at Ballarat, requires some explanation. The root of the evil simply was, that the diggers were not represented in the Colonial Parliament or Council; and other interests which *were* represented had enough to do with their own affairs, and had no time or inclination to attend to the diggers: in truth, there the diggers had no friends. The authorities on the diggings appear to have been of opinion that diggers and diggings were made specially for their benefit; and that their duty was simply to get money out of the diggers with the least possible trouble to themselves. If a digger was discovered without his licence in his pocket, he was not allowed to return home and get it, but was handcuffed and marched off by policemen to the station, where he lost his time, and was lucky if he got off without a fine, besides feeling himself affronted before thousands of his fellows, who could not know for what crime he was marched off to the station; and if he

attempted to escape he was fired at. I have before described the general feeling of independence amongst the diggers. The work they are engaged in fosters this feeling : they are their own masters, and it is upon their own strong arms they rely for success. They are mostly young men, full of spirit and energy, and they are mostly free-born Britons. Such, then, are not the men likely tamely to submit to a worse than Russian serfdom and tyranny. The men who have been appointed as rulers over them at the diggings are not superior in birth, education, or position, to many of the men they treat with supercilious contempt. They belong, in fact, many of them, to the worst class of colonists—young men who have been accustomed to no business habits at home, whose whole capital on coming to the Colony was a letter of introduction to the Governor, or some other party who had interest to appoint them.

The diggers object altogether to the licence fee, but more particularly to the way in which it is collected, with “drawn swords and fixed bayonets.” If this feeling is a general one, surely some other way can be suggested to raise a revenue. Why distress men who are such good customers, and who indirectly pay so large a share of taxes? Our policy is clearly to make things as comfortable for them as possible, so as to induce more such men to come over to the colony; not to frighten the well-disposed by an arbitrary and unpopular tax ruthlessly collected.

The want of land, and consequent enormous price paid for every product of the soil, was also felt to be a great grievance; but, to crown all, there was no probability of any redress—the digger was not represented, and his cry was either unheard or uncared for.

The rebellion was, however, speedily put down. Some scores of men were killed or maimed for life; and no doubt thousands were deterred from coming to the Colony in consequence. But although the riot was suppressed for that time, the evils complained of by the diggers must still be redressed. The well-disposed and orderly part of the community who refused to join in any outbreak, are entitled to consideration more than those who took up arms; and surely no one is interested in continuing a system altogether un-English, and opposed to sound policy.

It must be remembered, too, that, although the discontent at

these diggings. was universal, the numbers prepared to take up arms were very few. Indeed, quite the opposite feeling was displayed at Creswick's Creek. There about 20,000 persons were collected, and only three policemen were left to protect £40,000 worth of gold at the camp. The Commissioner went down amongst the people and applied for help to protect the gold in case of need; and he asserts that he could have sworn-in 12,000 men, willing to serve as special constables for this purpose. Surely this fact speaks volumes in favour of the good feeling and conduct of the gold-diggers of Victoria.

The number of workers at the diggings has been generally greatly over estimated. They were reckoned at 100,000; but the recent census has shown that they number only 67,000; and even now that large numbers have gone up from Melbourne, Geelong, and Sidney, in consequence of the fall in wages, the numbers do not I believe exceed 100,000 at all the diggings in the Colony. It consequently follows that the diggers have been doing much better than is generally believed.

The first actual discovery of gold in Australia was made by Mr. Hargreaves in the early part of 1851; though Sir Roderick Murchison, as long ago as 1845, gave it as his opinion that the precious metals were to be found in Australia: and, as President of the Royal Geographical Society, alluded to the fact in an address delivered in May of that year. To this conclusion Sir Roderick had come, in consequence of the resemblance which existed between the Australian mountain formations and those of the Ural; and so impressed was he with the truth of his supposition, that, in the next year, he addressed the Cornish Miners on the supposed discovery of gold near Bathurst, and urged the propriety of a strict geological examination of the district, which he styled the Australian Cordillera, with a view to the establishment of gold workings. Similar views were also entertained by Colonel Holmersen, of St. Petersburg, and the Rev. W. B. Clarke, of Sydney; but although these opinions obtained extensive publicity, both at home and in Australia, it remained for Mr. Hargreaves to make the actual discovery.

This gentleman, who was a resident of New South Wales, had returned thither from California, where he had acquired con-

siderable experience as a gold finder. Being struck with the resemblance between the Californian and Australian mountain formations, he set about a systematic search for gold; and on the 12th of February, 1851, he was rewarded by the discovery of gold in the streams and sands of the Wellington and Bathurst districts. Thus was Sir Roderick Murchison's prediction verified, and the scientific conclusion, that like geological appearances produce like results, was proved to be correct. As soon as Mr. Hargreaves had made good his discovery at Summerhill Creek, he reported the circumstance to the government, who immediately appointed Mr. Stuchbury, a colonial geologist, to make the necessary examination of the spot. This examination was so far satisfactory as to fully confirm Mr. Hargreaves' discovery. Soon afterwards, some specimens of this gold were shown in the Great Exhibition; and the discoverer was rewarded by the colonial government with a grant of £10,000, and an appointment as Commissioner.

Although Mr. Hargreaves must be considered as the actual discoverer of gold in Australia, there is little doubt that as early as 1813 the existence of gold in the Bathurst district was suspected. Bathurst is distant, by the post-road, about 150 miles from Sydney. It is surrounded by sheep and cattle farms, and is in the midst of a well settled and cultivated country. Thus was the gold of Australia, unlike that of California, found in the midst of civilization and plenty. In the entire district of the colony of Victoria, and in the streams flowing from the Snowy Mountains, gold has been found in greater or less quantities; and, indeed, in the whole south-eastern portion of the island, there is reason to believe that gold exists in large quantities.

About the close of the year 1849, when the colonists were comparatively poor, and no hint of the gold discoveries had been given, bushrangers or escaped convicts occasionally brought a small lump of the precious metal into the towns, where they sold it cheaply, and with a suspicious air; and the purchasers, directly concluding that it must have been the produce of some robbery—perhaps murder—in the bush, were, therefore, unwilling to ask questions, and quieted their consciences with the knowledge of having made a tolerably good bargain. Science, and not accident, led the professor to conclude that the great eastern mountain

chain of Australia was highly auriferous, from its geographical correspondence with the gold-fields in the Ural mountains; and a Mr. Smith, of the Berrima iron-works in New South Wales, having read the account of Sir Roderick's opinion in an English newspaper, was induced to search for gold in his neighbourhood. He did search, and was partially successful. He brought the gold to the colonial authorities, and offered to make the place of its discovery known for a reward of £500; but the governor, either disbelieving the report, or fearful of encouraging a gold fever, declined to grant his request. So it remained for Mr. Hargreaves to re-make the discovery, and get the Government reward.

The first discovery of Australian gold was made at a place called Summerhill Creek and Lewis Ponds River, small streams which run from the northern flank of the Canobolas to the Macquarrie River. The gold was found in the accumulated sand and gravel, especially on the inside and bends of the brooks, or at the junction of the water-courses, where the one stream would be checked by the flow of the other. At first, coarse, granular gold was found—a certain proof that the parent vein was not far off—existing, probably, in the quartz veins traversing the rocks of the Canobolas. Soon after gold was found in other localities, sometimes in the shape of tolerably large nuggets or lumps, sometimes in fine thin scales, and at others as dust, collected from the auriferous earth by repeated washings. There is little doubt but that gold-finding—by means of washing, mining, dry digging, and prospecting—may be carried on along the whole course of the Murray and Darling Rivers, and their several tributaries. The whole country from Moreton Bay to the City of Adelaide is more or less auriferous; indeed, as we have already observed, there is reason to believe that gold exists in Van Dieman's Land and New Zealand. Mount Alexander and its neighbourhood appears to have been the earliest, and, on the whole, the most profitable, of the gold-fields of Victoria. Indeed, the banks and beds of all the streams eastward of the Murray at its junction with the Darling have been found extremely rich in gold, tin, copper, and other valuable metals; and even rubies and garnets have occasionally turned up. Mount Alexander is situated within about eighty miles of Melbourne and Geelong. The whole district con-

sists of quartz rocks, broken up, and is highly auriferous. Gold is generally found lying loose in the sand and gravel, or buried deep in the clay which forms the substratum of the soil.

The discovery of gold in Victoria naturally produced great excitement in the minds of men, and a vast emigration from the other colonies of Australia, from the United States, and from all parts of the world, was the almost immediate result.

The Forest Creek diggings form part of the Mount Alexander gold district, and from the first have divided the regards of the gold-finders with the Ballarat, the Ovens, the Bendigo, and the Creswick Creek diggings. Forest Creek has for a long time past been a famous place of search for gold. In the winter it is a roaring, boiling, bursting torrent; but in the summer—the November and December of Australia—it is almost dry. The banks of the creek are tolerably well wooded. The wood of the red gum and shiock has been much used in the colony for all rough purposes, such as roofing, fencing, and bridges; but for fine purposes, although suitable, the expense of working it is so much greater than the American wood that the latter is preferred.

There are two kinds of diggings — river diggings and dry diggings. At the dry diggings, away altogether from the stream, gold must be found near the surface. We will suppose a party of diggers getting over all the difficulties of the road, and arrived on the gold-field. Unless they are so fortunate as to arrive at a time when some new diggings have been discovered, and before all the claims are occupied, they will have to prospect in search of one; so, while some are left in charge of the property, others provided with pickaxe, spade, and prospecting pan, start on the prospecting tour. The pan is merely a large, round, flat-bottomed shallow tin dish, into which, as soon as they come to what they consider a likely spot for gold, they will throw a spadeful of earth and stones; carrying it down with them to the stream, they will here dip it in the water and shake it, thus allowing the particles of gold, if there, to descend by their weight through the upper layer of agitated earth and stones; then, holding it so that the water may carry off the earth through which it will have passed, they again dip it in the water, and repeat this simple process until the earth is all carried away and the gold only left.

As soon as they find it in what they consider paying quantity, they will choose some convenient place on the stream where they may establish their cradle. The cradle is nearly the same thing as the common domestic article, with an upright wooden handle attached to it. Under the sieve is fixed, in the cradle, a board sloping downwards, with a couple of ledges across, dividing it into three nearly equal parts. The earth and stones are thrown into the sieve, when the cradle ought to be vigorously rocked, water being poured on so as thoroughly to separate the mud, clay, and earth, from the stones. When this is done, a glance is sufficient to tell if there are any nuggets of gold among the stones. The sieve is then filled again, the cradle rocked, the stones thrown out, and the process repeated until the accumulation of the mud at the ledges is considered sufficient, which is then carefully scraped away, and the gold picked out. Frequently there is none; sometimes only a few grains; but occasionally many ounces are taken out.

In the case of the dry diggings, the soil will of course have to be carried some distance to the cradle at the stream: as much sometimes as a pound per load is paid for carting to the water. Others make a pile of the richest stuff, and wait till the return of the rainy season for washing it. But river claims are considered the most valuable, and here it is not such a *sine qua non* to procure gold at the surface, because they look to the holes and crevices in the stream—pockets, as they call them—for the chief reward of all their toil in reaching it. So the prospecting party will most likely direct their steps to the river, and examine well all its peculiarities. Perhaps they will choose some promising bar, where, if with the prospecting dish they procure gold in any tolerable quantity, it settles the point at once, and they will bring down the cradle, pitch their tent, &c. But the soil may be gravel, and they can scarcely then expect to procure gold, by washing, near the surface; for the gravel, being easily separated by the current, will have allowed the gold to pass through to the bed of the stream; but if, after removing the top stones that almost invariably find their way to these bars, they reach a tenacious clay—as it will never, in all probability, have been thoroughly disintegrated by the current—they may calculate

on finding gold at once. A blue clay is especially considered very promising, though it gives, of course, a great deal of trouble in the washing, being exceedingly difficult to get thoroughly away from the stones and pebbles that it clings to so tenaciously. If they determine upon working this bar they will dig a trench, and, by the aid of back troughs, divert the stream. They will then dig till they reach the original bed, after removing in their way to it enormous slabs and stones—a labour which is not unfrequently for nothing. Or the party may choose some bank or spur over which, at some ancient date, the river has flowed. Here they will notice where the point would have been, and probably will choose the spot where they think the eddy caused by it has existed. Should they not procure gold at the surface, they may yet, according to circumstances, determine to work it; and very often holes, twenty feet deep and upwards, may be seen, out of which not a particle has ever been procured. As before, they will dig till they reach the original bed, and should they be so fortunate as to obtain a good yield from its pockets, following their direction, they will tunnel under the adjoining banks. Sometimes it happens that while in one hole hundreds of pounds' worth are thus procured in one day, the next claim will have yielded nothing. Many, indeed, work for weeks without meeting with any success. During the winter, the working of the bed claims is sometimes impeded. But this circumstance, so unfavourable to the New South Wales diggers, has proved quite the reverse to those at work on Mount Alexander, notorious as it is in ordinary seasons for its want of water.

Gold is believed to exist in the South Australian formations, near the mouth of the Murray, as it does also in those of New South Wales, at its head. The hilly quartz ranges there very much resemble those at Bryant's Ranges; and near Castlemain some little has been brought in, but the exact place kept a profound secret. The deposits do not, indeed, depend upon the rivers, but on the mountain chains which contain gold-bearing rocks.

In its primitive condition, gold is either of a yellow, silver-gray, or steel-white colour; in Australia, it is nearly always yellow. It shines with a peculiar brightness, which is increased by a slight rubbing; and, on account of its non-oxidable qualities,

it will not rust or tarnish. To distinguish gold from iron pyrites, a slight blow with a hammer or a cut with a knife will be sufficient. Gold is soft and malleable, and will flatten under the blow; while iron pyrites cannot be cut by the knife, and crumble under the hammer. Mica is much lighter than gold; weight and softness are the grand tests of gold. It is harder than lead or tin, but softer than silver, copper, or iron. Hence it is scratched by the latter metals, but will itself scratch the two former. When broken, the edges will be found to be abraded and uneven, with, sometimes, small crystals in the divided surfaces. Spurious gold may always be detected by the blow-pipe, before which it fuses, but its character remains unaltered; while copper and iron pyrites rapidly diminish, and give out a disagreeable sulphurous odour. The application of a little nitric or sulphuric acid—a small bottle of one of which, and a blow-pipe, every miner should possess—will easily detect factitious gold, on which the acids have no effect whatever; while, with nearly all other metals, a violent gaseous action arises on contact with the acid. A drop of nitric acid will instantly discover the presence of adulteration in gold. If pure, no action will be observed; but if mixed with baser metal, a red vapour will arise, and the liquor will be discoloured.

Gold being always found in a state nearly pure, and of high specific gravity, by its greater weight is readily separable from the earth or sand in which it is mixed; and, on being well washed, even in the palm of the hand, will leave behind the metallic particles. The collecting of the sand, and the washing, therefore, constitute the whole operation; and in the beginning of the new discoveries, we find men working with clasp-knives and wash-basins, for want of better tools. In the more advanced stages of working, however, picks and spades, and wheelbarrows, are brought into play, by which labour is made more effective. It does sometimes happen that the digger is rewarded with a lump of gold which, from being ten, twenty, forty, or fifty pounds weight, may at once yield him five hundred, a thousand, two thousand, or two thousand five hundred pounds; but most commonly the gold must be obtained by washing, being really in dust or scales.

Quartz crushing has recently attracted great attention, and no

less than seven inventors have applied for patents for new machines for this purpose.

The charge for gold by escort from Castlemain, Forest Creek, Bendigo, Heathcote, or Ballarat, is—Gold, per ounce, 6d. ; money, per pound sterling, 2d. From the Ovens and the MacIvor—Gold, per ounce, 1s. ; money, per pound sterling, 4d.

I have elsewhere given a short extract from the report of the Government geological surveyor, Mr. Selwyn ; and I now submit a further extract, which may be considered the most trustworthy information on the subject : emanating as it does from a highly competent authority, who is disinterested, and has studied the subject.

“ Irrespective of the geological age of the rocks, I should consider that those portions of the country in which the palæozoic strata have undergone the greatest amount of upheaval, metamorphism, and dislocation, are in all cases the most likely to prove auriferous.

“ The best guide, however, in searching for auriferous tracts is, I believe, the existence of quartz veins. In districts where little or no dislocation and disturbance of the strata has taken place, and where consequently few or no quartz veins have been formed, it is highly improbable that much gold would be discovered. In such districts, on the other hand, where a very considerable amount of upheaval, metamorphism, and dislocation of the strata has been effected, and in consequence numerous and extensive quartz veins may have been formed, the probabilities are highly in favour of the existence of gold and other metalliferous deposits. This is borne out by the position and course of all the richest worked gold-fields, which are invariably found following and gradually extending themselves on the bearing of some extensive system of quartz veins, such as those of Mount Franklin, Forest Creek, and Bendigo, or Ballarat, Daisy Hill, and Korong, with intervening granitic tracts, such as that extending from the Coliban to the Loddon, through Mount Alexander and Tarrangower—called also Bryant’s Ranges.

“ A good many theories have lately been advanced with respect to the origin of these auriferous quartz veins. I have before stated my opinion, that they are the sources whence the whole of the gold

now found in diluvial drift has been derived. With respect to their age and origin, at least in the Bendigo, Forest Creek, Tarrangower, Korong, and Daisy Hill districts, I believe that they, or, more properly, the fissures and cracks they now occupy, are either contemporaneous with, and the result of, the upheaval and dislocation of the older palæozoic strata, caused by the intrusion of the granites now seen on the surface; or that they are the result of dislocations and upheavals which had affected these older sedimentary deposits prior to the formation of these granitic masses, by the intrusion of which, they—the quartz veins—have been cut off.

“I am led to this conclusion from the fact that, however strong, numerous, and persistent these quartz veins may be, they are found, as it were, abruptly terminated on striking the granite, the auriferous desposits, of course, terminating also; a fact which tends further to prove the quartz veins to be the sources of the gold, and that the granite has not undergone the action of whatever nature it may have been which caused the formation of these veins.

“I can give no better instance of this than is found in the great non-auriferous granitic tract lying between the Rivers Coliban and Loddon, and completely separating the Bendigo from the Tarrangower and Forest Creek gold-fields; and there certainly appears no reason, unless one or other of the above suppositions be correct, why the granitic districts should not produce gold equally with those occupied by the sedimentary strata.

“As regards the question of ‘second bottoms,’ which has excited considerable discussion, and the waste of a large amount of time and labour, I may state my conviction that all such attempts must invariably end in disappointment and loss to those engaged in them. The real bottom is the solid rock, which has never been removed by denudation; and when that has once been reached, it is quite impossible that diluvial auriferous deposits can be found by sinking a greater depth through solid rock.

“When at Korong, I found a digger busily engaged sinking a shaft on the top of a range, in the solid schist and sandstone, immediately above one of the auriferous diluvial flats, with the firm conviction that the auriferous drift of the flat below passed underneath the hill, and that he should certainly find it by sinking some fifty or sixty feet to the level it occupied in the valley.

Some such notion it must be, I fancy, which induces diggers to waste their time and money searching for second bottoms.

“ I do not by this mean to assert that no gold can be found in sinking, but merely any operation extending to a greater depth at once ceases to be what may be strictly termed digging, and becomes mining, perfectly similar in its nature and results to the mining now carried on in quartz veins at the surface, and the one as unlikely as the other to lead to the discovery of any auriferous drift deposit. In the latter case, no miner would for a moment imagine such a thing possible. Why, then, in the former? As well might a tin-miner in Cornwall expect to find ‘ stream-tin ’ in the depth of the mine, as the digger to find a mechanical deposit of gold after sinking through five, ten, or fifty feet of solid rock.

“ With respect to the permanency of the supply of gold, I have no hesitation in stating my belief—

“ 1st. That the gold-fields of Victoria will prove as permanent a source of wealth to this colony as the tin and copper mines of Cornwall to Great Britain.

“ 2nd. That there are hundreds of square miles of country yet untouched by the pick of the digger, which present all the geological and surface indications of the existence of gold in as marked a degree as any one of the present known and worked gold-fields.”

Several new gold-fields have lately been discovered, all situated within a reasonable distance from Melbourne.

Quartz crushing by machinery is now engaging the attention of the diggers, and several spots have been worked with the most satisfactory results. It is generally believed that by this means, in future years, the largest quantities of the precious metal will be produced. It will also be the means of fixing the gold localities, and making the diggers a more settled population.

Gas works, public baths, churches, scientific institutions, are springing up in all directions, and the various diggings are rapidly becoming settled places of residence. Mr. Khull has made up his statement of gold shipped during the year 1854, to 88 tons, 3 cwt., 8 lbs., which, at 80s. per ounce, is worth £8,490,384. So long as we can turn out such a sum, or the half of it, we have plenty of means of paying for all the imports required for the present population.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MURRAY RIVER.

THE Murray River, like much else that is Australian, has been greatly calumniated. It has been condemned as useless; the land on its banks has been denounced as waste, and hardly fit to feed sheep and cattle on; and the river itself has been declared good for nothing but to supply these same animals with water. The general impression, both in and out of the colony, has been, that Australia, and especially Victoria, was a badly-watered country, deficient altogether of the fine inland navigation so valuable and so highly-prized in America. Light on this subject has but slowly dawned on the public mind; and even now, after the Murray River has been found safe to navigate, its mouth has been condemned as impracticable, and its enormous tributaries pronounced mere water holes. It is now satisfactorily proved that many thousands of miles of this river and its tributaries are navigable; that its mouth is safe for steamers drawing nine feet of water; that much fine land borders its shores; and that many minerals, much wood, and various other sources of wealth, abound in its neighbourhood. To the sportsman it is a really enchanting river, abounding with noble scenery and myriads of fishes, and frequented by birds of nearly every description known in Australia, including thousands of majestic swans, and innumerable ducks of fine plumage and excellent flavour.

It is to Captain Cadell, and to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of South Australia, that the public are indebted for these important discoveries; and that, too, in spite of much opposition from the public. Several steamers are now regularly employed on this river, in taking up stores to the squatters, and bringing down their wool, for eight months in the year—a longer

period than many of the rivers of America are open; and this without any accidents, although nothing has as yet been done to clear away the snags and shallows of the Murray. I have been assured that the mouth of the Murray is as safe for a steamer as the entrance to Port Philip; and there is no doubt that it not only can, but will be deepened, so as to admit vessels of any size.

As a feeder to a vast field for immigration, in a healthy and lovely country, the importance of this river can scarcely be over-estimated. With its waters clear as crystal, and its surface calm and placid, where could the weary pilgrim of the Old World, worn out with cares, and struggling with difficulties which at home he could never overcome, find a refuge so pleasant as upon its banks? Many years cannot pass away before towns and villages will stud the borders of this noble river, as they now stud the Mississippi or the Ohio; and steamers will be running daily from Goolwa in South Australia to Maidenspunt in Victoria, and to Albury in New South Wales.

The squatters have contributed to spread erroneous information, both regarding the river and the land on either bank: This is not surprising, for they now occupy the best part of the land with countless herds of cattle; and if it were taken up for towns and agriculture, they would necessarily be driven further back; and what it is very much to our interest to believe, the mind readily accommodates itself to. Hence, then, mistakes with regard to the Murray.

The Colonial Government should appoint an able geologist to survey and report on the banks of this great river and the adjoining country. Then the surveyor should follow and mark out sites for towns and farm-lands. Sugar, cotton, silk, rice, and many other products, may be cultivated here by the labour of thousands of Chinese, Indians, and others now flocking to the shores of Australia. The Mount Alexander railway is intended to be continued to Maidenspunt, and so connect the river with Melbourne. This railway passes through the richest gold-fields and finest tracts of rich land, and Government guarantees five per cent. (which is payable either in London or Melbourne), from the time of paying the money, and gives a grant of the land required for its formation. A single line of tramway should, in the first

instance, be driven through; and as the traffic increases, a double line could be put down, or transformed into a regular railway; but for years to come, a cheap tramway—costing £3,000 to £4,000 per mile—is all that is required. This would also command confidence—the stock would be readily taken up; large profits would be made, and immediate good to the country certainly result.

The blacks on the Murray are more numerous than in any other part of the Colony; and are better made, stronger, and more intelligent. Some of them have been found useful by the squatters; and on some stations the whole work of the station has been done by them. Some of them have even been domesticated, and with great care and kindness taught to read and write. They have, however, an instinctive dread of any religion, and are terrified if spoken to of a God. The idea apparently to their minds is that conveyed by some nurses to children of ghosts and hobgoblins.

Fish exist in the Murray in great numbers and variety; some larger than any salmon, and of fine flavour. The diggings are now supplied with such fish as fresh-water cod and bream, which are said in some cases to weigh 11½ lbs. They are caught with a hook; and as they are only sent for weekly from Bendigo diggings, an ingenious plan of tethering them has been adopted. In this hot climate a day would destroy them. They can be kept for several days without injury by tethering, which is done by means of a line passed through the jaw. The abundance of fish in the Murray is such that a few natives can fill a boat in one morning's fishing.

Beef and mutton, too, are abundant on the banks of the Murray; and the new colonist settling here would have plenty of game and fish as well, and a ready market in the several diggings for all sorts of food and agricultural produce, besides supplying the squatters with flour, &c., which is now obtained from America, and carted some hundreds of miles to their stations on the Murray, at a cost of from £10 to £50 per ton. Goolwa is the port at the mouth of the Murray where the river-boats take in and discharge their cargoes, and where the sea-boats will eventually exchange their cargoes. It is beautifully situated, and is said to be very healthy; a tramway connects it with Port Elliot. Much rich country adjoins Goolwa,—and many years can hardly pass before the natural advantages of this place must be appreciated.

Maidenspunt appears the most likely place for a thriving inland town, lying in the line to Sydney by railway, and the terminus on the Melbourne side; and on the nearest bend of the Murray to Melbourne and the diggings.

Tin ore, or black sand, is found near the Murray on the Ovens diggings. This has not been profitable to cart over the enormous land carriage, but may yet find its way down the Murray. Copper ore is found near the Murray; also gypsum, iron ore, and abundance of fine timber.

For the active enterprising colonist, many fine openings are here for either mining, agriculture, trading, or fishing.

When the Colony of Victoria may turn its serious attention to the Murray and its capabilities, it is difficult to say. The Brazilian Government gives an annual grant of £30,000 to a company for navigating the Amazon river; Victoria has not even claimed a vote of thanks, much less thought of giving money, to the enterprising man who at his own cost has procured the successful navigation of the Murray.

CHAPTER XII.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS, INSTITUTIONS, PLACES OF AMUSEMENT, AND
HOTELS IN MELBOURNE.

No department of the public service was more inadequate to the wants of the colony, in the early part of 1853, than the Post-office. It was generally believed in the colony—whether truly or not I cannot tell—that whole rooms in the building were packed close up to the ceiling with newspapers, and that they were burned to an enormous extent. It is, however, quite true that every one declared he got no newspapers; and as for letters, the difficulty of getting one must have been encountered to be understood. But all this is past now, and we may even venture a boast that our Post-office system is equal, in order and regularity, to any in the world. It is, indeed, a great contrast now to what it was.

The Post-office expenditure for 1853 amounted to .	£73,056
The income to only	25,753
	<hr/>
Loss	47,303

We are not singular in making a loss in the Post-office department, for the loss in Brazil was £7,425, and in the United States £449,879, for the year 1853. So that we attain to efficiency, and reduce the loss to the minimum compatible with such efficiency, we must make up our minds to a loss in this branch of colonial administration—at least for the present.

In 1853, no fewer than 3,657,788 letters and newspapers passed through the Melbourne Post-office, being about fifteen for each of the population, including children.

The importance of rapid communication between the United Kingdom and the colonies may, in some degree, be estimated by a reference to the enormous transactions with this colony alone.

The amount of gold sent home in 1853 was upwards of £11,000,000. The loss of time in the conveyance of this enormous sum may be safely stated, at present, at twenty-five days more than it would be by quick steamers or the overland route. The interest of this sum, at 6 per cent., which is under the colonial rate, is no less a sum than £45,000, which sum may be said to be lost annually to the colony. Besides this, the inconvenience to the markets in the colony cannot well be estimated; and when it is remembered that all have some friends in a far distant country, in whom they are deeply interested, it becomes less a money question, and more one of public necessity.

We received great injustice at the hands of the Home Government, when they removed all the steamers and left the West India and other less important interests untouched, and that, too, without giving any notice to the colony.

It is a question of the very greatest importance, which is the quickest and most regular route from England to Australia. That *via* Suez, even in its present imperfect state, is the one recommended by the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce. It is the shortest in miles, and by this route only have we had anything approaching to regularity. The Viceroy of Egypt has now given the necessary orders for the construction of a railway across the desert, between Cairo and Suez, a distance of eighty-four miles, and which in about three years is to be completed. This will settle the question as to which is the best route; and there is little doubt by the time this railway is completed, the distance may be reduced to one month, instead of two and a-half months, as now. For the present, we are dependent on the uncertain voyages of sailing vessels; and this must continue, unless the colonists, in the meantime, put on a line of steamers direct to Aden, which I am in hopes may be the case.

Arrangements have now been entered into by the Home and Colonial Governments to charge one postage only on all letters, prepaid or not at the option of the sender, at the rate of 6d. for half an ounce, 1s. for one ounce, 2s. for two ounces, and so on, 1s. for each ounce or part of an ounce, and an additional 5d. for every quarter of an ounce for letters sent *via* Marseilles—newspapers to pass free.

On my arrival at Cork I posted twenty-one letters to my friends, intimating my arrival, &c. These letters were partly written on board, but all finished and sealed in Cork. I stamped them all with English stamps, and put them into the usual box. Surely this was quite a regular and proper thing to do; but the Post-office conservator of the public revenue at Cork did not think so. He was aware that I was a passenger just landed from the colonies, and by some means selected all my letters out of the box, and charged them all with the Australian postage. I would willingly have paid this myself: but I felt very vexed that my friends should be made to pay this charge through the Yankee cleverness of this Irish postman, who might have informed me of his intention when I told him what I was doing, which I did when putting on the stamps.

Eighty-eight branch Post-offices are established in the colony, and the following are the colonial regulations:—

“Late letters paid for by the late-fee stamp in addition to the postage-fee, are received for one quarter of an hour after the published time of closing mails.

“Registered letters are received daily from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; but in order that they may be forwarded by the outward mails of the day, they must be posted two hours before the closing of such mails.

“Newspapers are cleared out for despatch at 8.30 and 11 a.m., and at 1 and 4 p.m. only; and any papers posted after those hours will be too late for transmission by mails despatched at the intervening periods.

“Any alterations in the above-named hours which may be required to be made on special occasions, will be duly notified to the public by the Postmaster-General.

“The public would do well to observe that all letters posted in the General Post-office bear a distinguishing time stamp, by which the hour at which such letters are posted can be traced. Thus, letters posted between 5.45 p.m. and 9.45 a.m. bear the letter A.; from 9.45 to 11.45, the letter B; from 11.45 to 12.45, the letter C; from 12.45 to 2.45, the letter D; from 2.45 to 3.45, the letter E; and 3.45 to 5.45, the letter H; at which hour, viz., 5.45, the stamps are changed to letter A for the following morning.

“Such letters as are found posted among the newspapers bear the newspaper as well as the letter stamp, in order to account for any delay that may occur by reason of such mistake.—General Post-office, Melbourne, February, 1855.”

The Mechanics' Institute of Melbourne contains a small library, in which are to be found few useful books, but which I have no doubt will shortly improve, as the public are quite alive to the importance of having good public libraries. It has also a reading-room, with all the colonial journals, and the principal home papers and periodicals of Great Britain. Lectures are also delivered once a-week on subjects of public interest, literature, and philosophy. The annual subscription is only one pound.

In noticing the public buildings in Melbourne, perhaps I should have given precedence to the Exhibition Building, which I have already alluded to. It is full of objects of the greatest interest. The show of gold specimens is certainly very extensive, but I am informed that another exhibition in the Union Hotel is not inferior to this in the Great Melbourne Exhibition. The specimens of Australian gold have been removed to the Paris Exhibition, and have created great interest there, forming one of the stands round which there is always a great crowd. There is a Theatre, to which Mr. G. V. Brooke has lately been drawing large audiences in a round of Shaksperian characters. Dancing Saloons are also numerous, and are not filled with the most reputable part of the community. Rowe's Circus, with an American company of equestrians, has also been the source of much amusement to the diggers and working classes, but is now about to be pulled down. Astley's Amphitheatre, capable of holding two thousand people, has just been opened for concerts, and has, I understand, been well conducted; and Miss Catherine Hayes has been delighting the lovers of music at the rate of £12 12s. for private boxes!

The Botanical Gardens, supported by Government, are well worth a visit. There will be seen what the soil really can do, when properly attended to; and there, also, the feathered tribes have taken refuge, and can still be seen in multitudes.

Further up the Yarra-Yarra River are the Cremorne Gardens, which are laid out with great taste, with pagodas, flowers, &c.

The Philharmonic Society, composed of amateurs, has acquired a wonderful proficiency and great popularity in Melbourne. It has recently purchased an organ which would do credit to any English music-hall. One of the regular, and certainly one of the most interesting sights of Melbourne, is the Printing-office of the *Argus*, which, for extent, will bear comparison with any similar establishment in England. The magnitude of this undertaking may to some extent be imagined when, for paper alone, a sum of thirty thousand pounds is required to be constantly employed. Almost all their machinery, type, &c., must also be in duplicate, as the distance from the markets is so great, in the event of any breakdown in the machinery, &c. The Port Philip Farmers' Society, for the annual exhibition of fat stock, implements, &c., is also conducted with great spirit, and excites much attention.

There are also various Benevolent Societies in Melbourne : the Scotch Association, for assisting Scotchmen when sick or in poverty ; the Ladies' Benevolent Association, for assisting women in sickness ; the Benevolent Asylum ; and the Immigrant's Aid Society. The Methodists' Immigrant's Home, free to any sect, has been of incalculable benefit when, in the early days of the gold era, a house was not to be had for love or money, and when the Government actually charged 5s. per week to the poorest immigrant for leave to pitch a tent on waste land ! The Victoria University and Public Library are both in a state of forwardness.

No class of property has multiplied with greater rapidity in Melbourne during the last two years, than that of Hotels. Previous to that, a few dirty, ill-regulated, and very expensive houses were all which the stranger had to choose from ; and if he happened to have a wife or daughters, their keepers declined the honour of receiving him altogether. Sad was the dilemma into which new arrivals were thrown, trudging from hotel to hotel, and receiving the same universal answer, " Quite full,—no room, sir," at all. Instances have even been known of families having had to remain in the streets all night. This must have been a sad damper to their hopeful expectations. These days, happily, are past ; and now, for a family with plenty of means, there are the Prince of Wales Hotel, in Flinders Lane ; Menzies, in La Trabe Street ; and hundreds of respectable private lodgings. For single gentle-

men there are the Port Philip Club Hotel, the Criterion Hotel, the Union Hotel, and a hundred others besides. Then, three miles from town, at St. Kilda, there is the Royal Hotel, and several others, all comfortable houses, and moderate in their charges.

Considering the price of other things in Melbourne, hotel expenses are not by any means high. For single gentlemen from 10s. to 20s. per day, not including wines, spirits, &c., is the usual charge. The expense is, of course, greater in proportion for ladies. A sum not less than £500,000 has been expended in building hotels in Melbourne these last eighteen months—and fortunes are not now made in a year, as they were in the early history of the gold-diggings.

CHAPTER XIII.

LABOUR IN VICTORIA.

NONE have reaped so rich a harvest from the discovery of gold in Australia, as the mechanic and labouring-classes. So great has been the demand for labour during the last four years, that trades'-unions have been quite out of fashion; and, with the exception of the printers and paper-hangers, there has been no strike among workmen in the colony. The carpenters had one meeting for the purpose of raising their wages from 25s. to 30s. per day; but this was not general, and the best workmen remained quietly at their work, and did not so much as talk to their employers of a rise in wages.

The following were the rates of wages in October, 1854, and 8th March, 1855:—

	October, 1854.				March 8th, 1855.							
	Wages per week.				Wages per week.							
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.			
Agricultural labourers, with rations*	1	10	0	to	1	16	0	1	0	0		
Blacksmiths	6	0	0	to	7	10	0	4	10	0		
Bricklayers	7	10	0	to	8	8	0	4	10	0		
Brickmakers, 50s. per 1000, equal to .	7	10	0	to	8	8	0	£2 p. 1000	or	6	0	0
Carpenters	5	8	0	to	7	10	0	3	0	0		
Clerks	2	10	0	to	10	0	0	2	10	0		
Compositors, 2s. 6d. per 1000, or .	7	7	0	—	—	—	4	4	0	or	1s. 6d. 1000	
Coopers	6	0	0	to	7	10	0	—	—	—		
Engineers	7	10	0	to	14	0	0	—	—	—		
General smiths	6	0	0	to	9	0	0	4	10	0		
Grocers' assistants	3	0	0	to	10	0	0	2	10	0		
Joiners	6	0	0	to	7	10	0	3	0	0		
Labourers	2	8	0	to	5	4	0	2	10	0		
Masons	6	0	0	to	7	10	0	4	16	0		
Painters and glaziers	3	15	0	to	4	10	0	3	0	0		
Plasterers	6	0	0	to	7	10	0	6	0	0		
Printers (pressmen and machinists) .	7	7	0	—	—	—	4	4	0	—		
Quarrymen	4	4	0	to	5	8	0	4	0	0		
Storemen	3	12	0	to	6	0	0	3	12	0		

* Rations consist of 10 lbs. of flour, 12 lbs. of butchers' meat, 2 lbs. of sugar, 4 oz. of tea, salt, &c., per week.

	October, 1854.		March, 1855.	
	Wages per annum.		Wages per annum.	
	£	£	£	£
Female servants:—Cooks	45	to 100	25	to 35
Thorough servants	30	to 35	25	to 30
Housemaids	20	to 25	20	to 25
Laundresses	40	to 52	25	to 35
Nursemaids	20	to 25	15	to 20
	With rations.			
Married couples, without families	80	to 100	65	to 85
Ditto, with families	70	to 75	60	to 80
Shepherds	40	to 45	40	to 45
Hutkeepers	30	to 35	30	to 35
Stockkeepers	50	to 75	45	to 70
Grooms	60	to 70	45	to 60
	Sheepshearers, 20s. per 100.			

For eighteen months previous to March last, the rate of wages ruled somewhat higher; but it is to be kept in view that everything is now much cheaper than it was, and that a workman can save nearly as much at the present as he could at the higher rates formerly common. A considerable number of mechanics have recently been out of employment, particularly such as are connected with the building trades. The first chapter in the history of building in Melbourne may now be said to be closed: those buildings necessary to meet the exigencies of the times have been rushed up with as little delay as possible. But no builder has of late done more than could not be avoided: and all have been waiting, as it were, and looking on to ascertain if wages really were to come down or not. This was a difficult problem, which time only could solve—but in the meanwhile building in Melbourne was almost suspended. No doubt large works for Government, and works of public companies, must shortly be commenced, and this may, for a time, again cause a rise in wages; but ultimately they must come down. Let them, however, fall even a third lower than they now are, and the workman in Australia will be vastly better off than he is at home.

A curious practice exists in the Colony of taking a "smoking time" in the forenoon for a quarter of an hour, and again in the afternoon for a quarter of an hour. All the men leave off work and deliberately sit down and smoke. This, with sundry "nobbler" which they are allowed to take (a nobbler is a small glass of spirits), will count not less than an hour each day for every man, and is equal to a loss of £2,500,000 annually, allowing only 2s. per

hour for 80,000, besides the cost of tobacco and spirits. There has been considerable complaint of want of work in Melbourne for some months past, and the following table has been published by the chairman of the workmen's meeting:—

OUT OF WORK.			
General Trades	75 Men.	Engineers	5 Men.
Windowblind-makers	2 "	Gardeners	6 "
Agriculturists	3 "	Blacksmiths	12 "
Clerks	7 "	Painters and Glaziers	11 "
Brick-makers	5 "	Grocers	2 "
Compositors	5 "	Quarrymen	1 "
Printers (pressmen)	4 "	Bricklayers	21 "
Ditto (machinists)	3 "	Millers	2 "
Storemen	10 "	Labourers	195 "
Coopers	2 "	Plasterers	5 "
Boot and Shoe-makers	5 "	Masons	41 "
General Smiths	6 "	Carpenters	111 "
Joiners	30 "	Total	—569

This, although a considerable list, does not represent all who are out of work, but only that portion who signed the memorial to Government. It is also to be remembered that the country districts require a large number of workmen, but that a great disinclination exists on the part of the men to leave Melbourne. I have known Melbourne wages paid, with board added, to induce men to go into the country. All the stations in the country may be stated to be underhanded. Since the diggings commenced, the inland towns have been, as yet, little else than canvas-towns; and no doubt now that labour is more abundant, building will go on in good earnest in these country towns.

The following is extracted from the *Argus* of Oct. 28, 1854:—

“The state of the labour market may be ascertained from the rates of wages quoted, and from the following ‘Wanted,’ which have appeared within these few days in the local papers:—‘500 pick and shovel men, 10s. to 12s. per day, tent, tools, wood, and water,’ ‘500 stone breakers, 6s. to 10s. per yard, tents,’ &c. Such advertisements appear daily, and, taken in connexion with the fact that tolerable workmen can break from two to three yards every day, indicate the attainment of a really comfortable maintenance, and a respectable weekly balance, at even this the least skilled and simplest kind of labour.”

The Americans have passed laws to prevent foreigners from

digging and carrying away the gold of California. The example of a people generally liberal and enlightened, as the Americans undoubtedly are in their legislative capacity, is entitled to be carefully considered; and if it be not followed, some reasons given for its rejection. The Chinese came at first in small numbers to Australia, some previous to the gold era; a few tried the diggings, and returned home with their gold. Their reports acted on the populace of China as advertisements do on the people of England. Wherever they went they intimated the great riches to be obtained, the freedom to be enjoyed, and the perfect protection afforded them in Australia. For the few who returned to China, thousands have immigrated at their own expense to Australia. Many of these, no doubt, intend to return with as much gold as they can; but each when he returns will spread the news far and wide, and send out, in his turn, more and more, until, perhaps, the country has its millions of Chinese population. Our own population take to the diggings only as a last resort. A carpenter will not go and dig unless he can make more by it than by his business; and so on with all mechanics. It is the hardest work, and accompanied by the greatest discomforts; therefore it is mostly men who are out of work, or men who by irregular habits are disqualified for regular work, who take to the gold diggings. So it will be with the Chinese. They will not all dig, any more than other men; neither will they be all successful any more than other men. They will therefore take to other regular employment, if they can make money enough by it to live comfortably. In either case, they are customers to the dealer as other men are. John Chinaman is no doubt saving and economical; but this disposition is generally thought rather a virtue than a vice, or is at least indicative of some virtue. Their consumption of butchers' meat is considerable; and their love of good clothing, and better living than plain rice, is not to be denied: in fact, they restrict themselves to rice only when they cannot afford to purchase butchers' meat. They are therefore customers so long as they remain; and when they leave, they are living advertisements to send more of their countrymen to the shores of Australia. By such means a great Chinese people are being transformed under British Government into British customers. We are not conquering them as warriors of old have conquered, but we are working

out a new problem ; we are founding a Chinese people in mercy and justice,—not in blood and rapine. Let us extend to them the most perfect protection, and hold out to them every encouragement to immigrate ; for in Australia there is room enough for all.

There are thousands of miles of land between Victoria and the Indian Ocean, too hot for European labourers, but suitable for Chinese ; new colonies will spring up, and labour will flow in, a regular and voluntary stream, to cultivate fields of rice, cotton, sugar, and every other tropical product. In fact, the natives of a warm climate are indispensable to the opening up of the country to the northward ; and to stop their immigration, or to put impediments in the way of their free entry into the colony, is a policy as short-sighted as it is unjust and suicidal.

Why should we not rather hold out inducements for them to cultivate the land to the north, or, rather, near the rivers in the interior ? In fact, we had better give them the land than allow it to remain unoccupied. It is lying idle, and is likely for ever to lie idle, so far as Europeans are concerned. We might thus, in a few years, have thriving dependencies of Chinese and Indians, growing nearly every product required in Australia, and producing many new and valuable articles of export, such as cotton, sugar, &c.

This is the true road to conquest and to empire. The days of the Pizarros, the Clives and Hastings, are now, I hope, past ; the laws of honour and justice are now too well understood and acknowledged. May it be the work of the men of Victoria to render their name famous as the pioneers of a new system, founded on the eternal law of God, to “ do unto others as we would they should do unto us.”

At about the 30th degree of latitude, and on the Darling, there is abundance of rich country, with a navigable river running right through it. A first experiment might be made on this land, in growing tea, rice, cotton, or silk ; and even if the land were given away, it would be a profitable transaction, if such an experiment succeeded. The climate of Australia, in the latitude alluded to, being almost identical with that of China, there is every reason to believe that all Chinese products would thrive well. The Chinese in Australia have proved themselves good shepherds,

cooks, and even agricultural labourers. They are men full of enterprise, and will themselves bring from the "flowery land" the requisite seeds and plants, if encouragement and protection be afforded them. I have examined this question simply in a commercial and political light. I am quite aware of the moral aspect in which it can be viewed; but as that is not my province, I shall not take up time and space in its discussion. Certainly, the missionary will then have a good field open for his operations. The government of Havannah have just entered into two contracts for the importation, on a large scale, of Chinese colonists. This is a significant fact, in a country worked by slaves.

Instances by the thousand might be given of the success of the working-classes in Victoria. The following will suffice:—A carpenter who arrived twelve months ago, and who, up to that time, had saved nothing more than paid his passage, has,—known to me,—sent £61 home, and has, besides, £200 in the bank. Another carpenter, known to me, from Edinburgh, who purchased a house from his employer, to be paid for in twelve months, and brought it with him, has saved £500 in a year. He is a married man. I inquired how he had saved so much, as a workman's wages scarcely amounted to that sum? His wife, he told me, let lodgings in the house he brought with him; the profits arising from this source had paid all the expenses of the family: besides which, he had made more than the regular wage, by some small contracts he had undertaken. This man, always steady and well-behaved, who had not been able to save more, in the old country, than enough to pay his expenses out, had, in one year, realized, to him, a competency. By lending this sum, at the present time, he could get from £100 to £125 per annum, secured by mortgage on good property.

Shop-keepers in the principal streets of Melbourne have been making incomes of from £1,000 to £15,000 a year; medical practitioners from £1,000 to £16,000 per annum; barristers from £1,000 to £5,000; but the largest incomes are certainly those of the house-proprietors, many of whom have realized from £10,000 to £30,000 per annum. Many of the squatters who, before the gold discovery, were, through mismanagement and extravagance, on the verge of bankruptcy, and whose stations were mortgaged to

the fullest extent, have, by the rise in the price of stock, become suddenly possessed of enormous wealth—their yearly incomes being stated at from £1,000 to £20,000.

Wages in Victoria must always bear a favourable proportion to the earnings of the diggers and the price of food. An industrious man can always make from four to five pounds at Bendigo and the other diggings, which is as good as from three to four pounds in Melbourne and Geelong. This fact will necessarily prevent wages in the towns from falling below three pounds per week ; for so soon as there is a tendency to a fall below that sum, hundreds of workmen will move to the diggings, and so again establish the right balance between demand and supply. In this light, the gold-diggings may be considered the safety-valve for labour in Australia.

From a letter now lying before me I extract the following paragraph. The writer is a compositor :

“ Since I have been here, wages in our line have fallen considerably—from seven guineas a-week to about £4 10s.—but articles of food have also fallen in price, so that we are just as well off now as then. No man who knows his business need be out of work here ; and even if you are, the gold-fields are always open to you. Why do you stay at home to pay double income-tax, and starve upon a hundred a-year, when, with a little management, you might live well, and save more money out here ?”

The new arrivals in Victoria are not always able to go at once to the diggings, for want of means ; and it will occasionally happen, when several thousands of men arrive during one week (and that in a depressed state of business, such as we have more than once experienced), that considerable individual suffering will be the result. But this will be of short duration, as there is always room for any number of men at the diggings. It must not be forgotten, however, that the digger must start with from ten to twenty pounds in his pocket, as he will require at least that sum to reach either of the gold-fields, and support him till he sinks his hole. The cost of getting to Castlemaine by coach, and living on the way, will be about £5 ; riding your own horse, £3 ; walking and living at the hotels, about £4 ; boarding at the diggings, about 40s. per week ; and living in hotels, about £7 per week. These are the

rates that have hitherto ruled, but changes are rapidly taking place ;—the roads are improving ; everything is getting cheaper ; plenty of vegetables, fruit, poultry, milk, cheese, and butter, may, it is to be fairly anticipated, be soon obtained at the diggings, and on the roads, at moderate prices. Gold will be got as abundantly then as now ; so that the working-man's prospects may really be said to be as bright, or even brighter, now than ever. Those who have gone out from the old country to Australia have merely opened up the way for others to follow ; and the future of the workers in Australia—all those who are strong in limb and heart, and persevering in well-doing, the industrious, the prudent, and the wise : those who can work with bone and sinew, or with brains—is radiant with hopeful promise ; they may prepare their " swag," take out their passage, for a time say farewell, and off for a trial to the land of diggers,—emphatically the land of workers,—where all such succeed, and where the lazy, the vicious, and the helpless, sicken and die.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE EFFECTS OF THE GOLD DISCOVERIES.

THE public, as well as the merchant, is interested in ascertaining what may be the effect of the discovery of gold in Australia on European prices. To the annuitant, and others with small fixed incomes, a reduction in the value of gold would bring poverty and ruin. By a reduction of one-fourth in the value of gold, the nation would be relieved of the National Debt to the amount of upwards of £190,000,000; but just to this amount would annuitants and other public creditors be the poorer. The importance of the subject; therefore, as well as the fact that others who have written on it have treated it erroneously, is my reason for trying to throw on it some light by the following remarks.

Gold being the standard of value in this country, its price is alone fixed by Act of Parliament, and is neither more nor less than a measure by which other commodities are valued or measured, in the same way as an ounce is the standard of weight, or a yard that of lineal measure; so a sovereign is a portion of an ounce, and will remain so if gold were as easily procured as silver; thus a sovereign would still be the same proportion of an ounce, and called a sovereign still, although its value would then fall to that of silver. Two distinct principles come into operation in regulating prices:—

1st. The cost of producing an article regulates the price at which it can be sold. This cost must include the manufacturer's remuneration (which is called profit), interest of money, and all other charges. If the price rises above this, competition ensues, and prices again fall to the above standard. On the other hand, if the price falls below this standard, the weaker manufacturers are driven out of the market, the produce is diminished, and

prices again rise to the point at which the selling price balances the cost, or leaves a profit to the producer.

2nd. Prices are affected by any sudden demand for an article, or by a scarcity of supply. This, however, is but a temporary effect; the demand being met, prices recede again to the above standard.

The first, then, is a permanent cause in regulating prices—the second, that of demand and supply, is simply temporary and fluctuating. Gold is subject to the above laws as other commodities are, and to no other. Iron, by the introduction of the hot blast in its manufacture, could be produced at a much less cost than formerly; and by that and other cheapening processes in its production, the value of all articles of iron manufacture have fallen, since 1820, fully one-half. It is the reduction, then, in the cost of producing iron, which has given to it a permanent reduction in price. The enormous increase in supply is in consequence of the demand, and the demand is a consequence of the reduction in price, and by no means the cause of that reduction. The reduction in the price has induced its use in a hundred ways which, at the old prices, would not have answered: for instance, in roofing it has greatly displaced timber and slates, for pipes it has displaced wood, and it is also largely used in ship building. Hence the consumption has risen from 615,236 tons in 1825, to 2,008,200 tons in 1854. But no one will say this enormous increase in supply is the cause of the reduction in the price: on the contrary, the increase of supply is simply a result of that reduction.

Further, I will take silver, the fall in the value of which has been very marked; and similar results are predicted with reference to gold.

COMPARATIVE VALUE OF SILVER WITH WHEAT IN ENGLAND.

- In 1554 Wheat was not allowed to be exported if it exceeded 6s. 8d. per quarter, which was then considered a price above which it should not rise.
- 1557 Silver ores were first treated with mercury.
- 1558 Prices rose to 23s. per quarter.
- 1571 The process of amalgamation introduced into Peru.
- 1573 Wheat sold in England at 26s. per quarter.
- | | | | | |
|------|---|---|------|---|
| 1574 | " | " | 40s. | " |
| 1587 | " | " | 64s. | " |

Here again, as with iron, the cost of producing it is what affects its value. As the cost of producing silver is lessened, the greater is the number of ounces required to buy a quarter of wheat.

The relative value of gold to other commodities is said to have undergone a similar change to that of silver, and the following table is given by Mr. Westgarth as a proof of the depreciation in the value of gold. I have added 1854 and 1855 to his table.

	1841	1842	1843	1844	1845	1846	1847	1848	1849	1850	1851	1852	1853	1854	1855
Copper	98	87½	80	84	88½	93	98	88½	79½	84	84	102½	107½	126	126
Iron bars	7	5½	4½	6½	8	9½	9½	7	5½	5½	5½	9	8½	7	7
Lead, pig	20½	18	16	16½	19½	18½	18½	16½	16	17½	17	18	23	24	22½
Spelter	33	29	22½	21½	24	18½	20	13½	15½	14½	14½	16	22½	30	28
Tin, English block	80	69	60	73	90	92	85	75	73	73	84	87	107½	119	111
Silver	60½	60	59½	59½	59	59	59½	55½	59½	59½	60½	60½	61½	61½	61½

This shows an advance in prices during the gold era, up to 1854; but these were years of great prosperity, and the increased demand, in all probability, occasioned the increased price—which is the more probable, as the prices have again receded in 1855, notwithstanding the great increase in the quantity of gold.

Westgarth, so sound on most subjects, has fallen into the mistake of supposing that a fall in the value of gold will be caused by the enormous supplies. Now, I have shown above that a fall in value can only permanently take place if the article—gold or iron—can be produced at a less cost than before. This does not appear to be the case at present, as a slight increase in the rate of wages in Melbourne draws off thousands from the less profitable diggings; showing clearly that the diggers themselves consider that the value of the gold they procure is only slightly in advance of the wages they might obtain by labour in Melbourne. A fall in wages at Melbourne has again sent thousands of workmen back to the diggings.

One more illustration as to what I mean by the “cost of production.” Suppose an ounce of gold and a quarter of wheat cost the same amount of labour, rent, &c., to produce them,—viz., 80s.—no more will be produced than can be sold at that price; but suppose by some discovery that two ounces of gold can be produced at

the price which one cost formerly, then it will just take two ounces of gold to be equal to the one quarter of wheat. Gold being fixed in price, it necessarily follows that the two ounces of gold at 80s. will be equal to the one quarter of wheat, which will then be worth 160s. : and in the same way will all other commodities be doubled in price. Such, I have already shown, is not likely to be the case, as a slight fall in value would put a stop to the working of the less profitable gold-fields. Besides this, gold, like iron, will be used for many new purposes; and more particularly it will displace, in the first instance, the silver currencies; indeed, any depreciation like that of silver or iron is not to be apprehended. Up to the present time it does not appear that gold can be produced much cheaper than formerly. In estimating the cost of production, we must take into consideration the hardships of the workmen, which require excessive remuneration, in the same way as any other disagreeable or very hard work at home requires higher pay. Secondly, it must be remembered that all descriptions of provisions, clothing, &c., are greatly enhanced in price at the diggings, in consequence of the freight, land carriage, and large profits required by the storekeepers.

The cost of producing the gold in Australia may certainly be reduced when the roads to the diggings are made, and when the land in their vicinity gets into cultivation; this may fairly be expected in a great degree to be the case in the course of a year or two. Then, indeed, the full effect of the gold discoveries will, if ever, be felt on prices.

Another consideration, too, is how far the gold quartz-crushers may affect the cost of production.

It does not, however, appear clear how far the value of gold may yet be depreciated; so many circumstances—new discoveries, new roads, agriculture, or improved machinery, &c.—may be brought to bear upon it; but in England, up to the present time, no great effect has been produced by the influx of the precious metal. It is not the quantity brought to market, but the cost of procuring it, which will, as I have before observed, permanently affect its value.

In the Colony itself, the value of everything has been greatly affected, but chiefly through the second cause—viz., the supply not

equalling the demand ; and the true effect of gold on colonial prices cannot yet be accurately ascertained.

Land, houses, provisions, &c., have all been short of the demand in the Colony, and they have consequently risen to unprecedentedly high prices, which, as the supply increased, have to a large extent again receded.

Labourers at 10s. per day prefer the town work ; when wages fall to 8s., numbers leave for the diggings, as preferable to 8s. per day in Melbourne. It therefore follows, that when labour costs 10s. per day in Melbourne, it does not pay to remove it, at that price, to dig gold at the diggings ; but labour is rather tempted from the gold diggings to Melbourne.

If Australia was cut off from all extraneous supply, the adjustment would be sudden ; but exposed as it is to the markets of the whole world, these must also all be affected before the rise in Australia is fixed. And the full effect of this operation is to be looked for only in those articles not directly affected by importations from abroad ; for instance, bricks are sold in London at 25s. per 1000, in Australia at 125s. per 1000, or five times the price is common ; indeed £16 per 1000 has been paid.

The price of any article in Victoria not affected by foreign competition may be reckoned at from four to five times home prices ; hence it takes four or five times the sum to purchase colonial products in Victoria that it does to purchase English products in England. Suppose a gold mania to take place in England, by which every man could make 10s. a-day : this would immediately have the same effect that it has had in Australia, and every product would rise in price, gold remaining at the same nominal value of £3 17s. 10½d. per ounce ; but it would take two or three ounces to buy what one ounce formerly bought. Rents of houses, land, &c., would all rise. Those only who had fixed money incomes would be losers : those would be gainers who are debtors, and those losers who are creditors. In Australia this has been remarkably illustrated in the case of some of the squatters, who were in debt to the value of their whole flocks, stations, &c.—in fact, were worth nothing, and were only in name the owners. Well, the gold is discovered ; every pound of their debt is suddenly transformed to five shillings, or, in other words, every sheep, &c., is

worth four times its former value; and the man who held, for instance, a station worth £10,000, but who had it mortgaged, and was in debt to the amount of £10,000, suddenly finds himself in possession of a property worth £40,000 with £10,000 of debt. I believe this proportion, although often exceeded—and leases of houses at £100 have been re-let at £1000—will not be maintained, and that a rise in price of 100 per cent. will be about the extreme rate of rise. It will, therefore, be well for those who can realise in the present high state of the market, as there is nothing to justify a continuance of price four times former rates.

A great contrast might be drawn between the early days of the Spanish gold colonies and those of our own. The Spaniards found a highly-refined people, and a paradise teeming with plenty and every luxury; manufactures and arts which surpassed that of their cruel conquerors, and flocks which were counted by millions: they transformed the land to a wilderness, butchered the inoffensive and simple natives, burned and destroyed their cities, outraged their wives and daughters, and scattered their flocks. *We* found a wilderness, containing nothing on which civilized man could live, and on which the degraded natives could barely subsist—the most disgusting food, such as grubs, and on human flesh—without manufactures, agriculture, arts, or settled abode. As with the touch of magic, it is becoming a paradise, bearing the richest fruits, the most luxuriant crops, a highly-civilized population, and flocks covering every valley and every hill.

May the contrast be continued in our future history; and as we have founded an empire in peace and mercy—a blessing to the mother country, and a double blessing to those who have been the founders—may she continue expanding and consolidating in peace and plenty, maintaining that good faith for which she is now pre-eminent, and the want of which was so striking a feature in the early adventurers of Peru and Mexico.

I have endeavoured to show that the effect of the gold discoveries on prices need alarm no one; and in the previous chapter I have shown that the gold discoveries have drawn together a population eminent for energy, and not inferior, as a whole, to the population of the best parts of the United Kingdom, in freedom from crime—in fact, that the immigrant in Australia

is almost free from crime; and that, but for the escaped convicts from the adjoining settlements, Victoria would present the aspect of a people with an almost entire immunity from crime. I have shown that, as a community, it is the richest in the world; and that all the bankruptcies, so much talked of, do not amount to any appreciable percentage on the business transactions of the colony; that Victoria is the most valuable dependency of the British Crown; that its people are an orderly and a religious people; that the climate is a good climate; and that the country has yet room for many millions of immigrants.

THE END.

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